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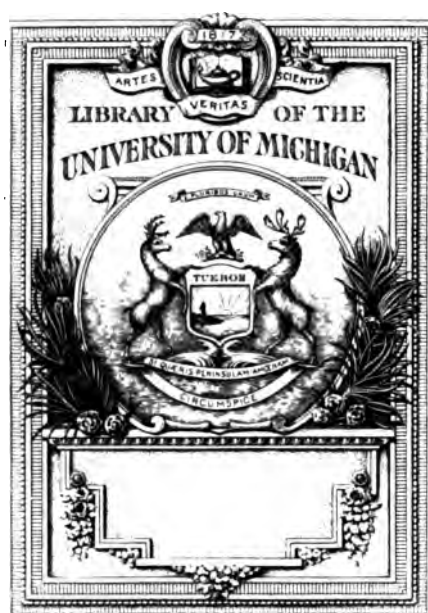
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BUCKLE AND HIS CRITICS.



BUCKLE  
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*A STUDY IN SOCIOLOGY*

BY

JOHN MACKINNON ROBERTSON

AUTHOR OF

"MODERN HUMANISTS," "THE FALLACY OF SAVING," "THE EIGHT HOURS  
QUESTION," ETC., ETC.

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## PREFACE.

THE following chapters are the outcome of a beginning in the way of vindicating Buckle which did not go beyond a few columns of a weekly journal. Begun before I had read Mr Huth's "Life of Buckle," with its able defence and exposition of his doctrine, my essay was continued by way of covering further portions of the ground and meeting other lines of attack. The inquiry began, I think, impartially enough. Every argumentative writer, however great, it cannot be too often repeated, is open to exposure in respect of blunders; and if Newton's physics and Darwin's biology are alike laden with fallacious cosmic philosophy, the admirer of Buckle cannot be surprised to find his teaching strongly accused of error. But it has seemed to me from first to last that Buckle has in general been attacked unjustly and unreasonably, blamed where he is right, and (in England at least) let pass where he is wrong. For one fair charge against him, I have met five which were either mistaken or disingenuous. To read Buckle's detractors is an education in the knowledge of human perversity, fallibility, and profligacy of blame. Again and again, indeed, I have wondered whether I was possessed by a deluding prejudice which made me see misrepresentation or reckless error in critique after critique coming from men of good repute. But after using all the vigilance of which I am capable, I remain convinced that the common depreciation of Buckle in recent years is in large measure the result of slovenly reading and slatternly thinking on

the part of men wont to sit in judgment on their fellows ; and that even of the animadversions of able and scrupulous men on his book, much is to be dismissed as misconception, fallacy, and prejudice.

The task, too, has been in some ways so instructive to myself that I have been led to hope its result may do more for others than merely remove from their minds misjudgments and misconceptions of the work of a great and true historian ; though I shall be sufficiently rewarded if it does that much. If the facts of the case in hand are as I see them and have set them forth, they are discreditable to the literary class, considered as a body of seekers after ascertainable truth, and compared with the students of the physical sciences. The more one reads, certainly, the less one is disposed to be persuaded by a criticism of an unread author ; and the less readily respectful one grows of individual judgments. But no writer, certainly not Gibbon, who has undergone detraction in every European language, has to my knowledge had proportionately so much one-sided criticism as Buckle. A fresh critical survey of the case may perhaps tend somewhat to alter the proportions. In any event, the sufficient reason for this book is that there are some dozens of essays and treatises extant in which the work of Buckle is more or less seriously misstated, and more or less unjustly disparaged ; and that vital truths are thus in a measure obscured.

For references to a number of the criticisms dealt with I have to thank the excellent bibliography appended to Mr Huth's "Life of Buckle" : others I have come across in general reading. No doubt I have missed some of importance. Needless to say, however, many reviews and criticisms of Buckle have struck me as needing or deserving no notice. As it is, I fear most readers will reckon it a

fatiguing business to go through so much of controversy, even if they share to some extent my estimate of the writer I have sought to vindicate. I can only hope that some of the discussions, such as those on the criticisms of Mill, Mark Pattison, Lange, and Mr Venn, and that on Buckle's view of intellectual "protection," will do a little to clear up some disputed points in historical and moral philosophy ; and that at least some of the discussions on concrete fact may separately interest different readers.

It remains to express here my earnest thanks to the subscribers—about a hundred and fifty—who by undertaking in advance to purchase this book, after seeing a conspectus of its contents in the *Free Review* of May last, have made possible its printing and publication.

*October, 1895.*



# CONTENTS.

|                   |            |
|-------------------|------------|
| PREFACE . . . . . | PAGES<br>V |
|-------------------|------------|

## INTRODUCTION.

|                                                                                                                                                                                                          |      |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| Buckle's relation to the thought of his time ; his measure of acceptance ; the reasons for the hostility towards him in his lifetime and since ; the benefit to be derived from a study of him . . . . . | I-22 |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|

## CHAPTER I.

### GENERAL DISPARAGEMENTS.

|                                                     |    |
|-----------------------------------------------------|----|
| § 1 MR GRANT ALLEN'S . . . . .                      | 23 |
| § 2. DR TYLOR'S . . . . .                           | 24 |
| § 3. DR HILL BURTON'S . . . . .                     | 24 |
| § 4. DARWIN'S . . . . .                             | 25 |
| § 5. M. WYROUBOFF'S . . . . .                       | 26 |
| § 6. MACAULAY'S . . . . .                           | 26 |
| § 7. MR EDWARD CLODD'S . . . . .                    | 28 |
| § 8. PROFESSOR ALLEN'S MISREPRESENTATIONS . . . . . | 33 |
| § 9. BAGEHOT'S . . . . .                            | 34 |
| § 10. PROFESSOR INGRAM'S . . . . .                  | 36 |
| § 11. ARNOLD'S ESTIMATE . . . . .                   | 37 |
| § 12. MR JOHN MORLEY'S . . . . .                    | 41 |

## CHAPTER II.

### MR LESLIE STEPHEN'S CRITICISM.

|                                                                                                                      |    |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| § 1. Comparative Tests—Darwin and Buckle—Second-hand scientific conviction ; Mr Morley and Sir Henry Maine . . . . . | 42 |
| § 2. Buckle compared with Comte—Their literary styles . . . . .                                                      | 45 |
| § 3. Mr Stephen's general concessions . . . . .                                                                      | 48 |
| § 4. The question of food and climate as economic and political factors . . . . .                                    | 49 |
| § 5. Climate and civilisation : absurdity of Mr Stephen's formula . . . . .                                          | 50 |
| § 6. His confusions . . . . .                                                                                        | 55 |
| § 7. Misrepresentation of Buckle's economics . . . . .                                                               | 55 |

|                                                                                          | PAGES |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| § 8. Misrepresentation of his attitude on heredity : arbitrary de-<br>traction . . . . . | 56    |
| § 9. Misrepresentation of his plan and pretensions : Buckle and<br>Montesquieu . . . . . | 59    |
| § 10. Buckle and Scotch history : Mr Stephen's method of disparage-<br>ment . . . . .    | 60    |
| § 11. Buckle on Scotch deductiveness : his errors : Mr Stephen's .                       | 62    |
| § 12. Mr Cliffe Leslie on Adam Smith . . . . .                                           | 66    |
| § 13. Mr Stephen's economic inconsistencies . . . . .                                    | 68    |
| § 14. Buckle on Hume's deductiveness : Mr Stephen's errors .                             | 69    |
| § 15. The comparative test once more : Who beats Buckle ? .                              | 71    |
| § 16. Had Buckle lived ? . . . . .                                                       | 73    |

## CHAPTER III.

## THEODORE PARKER'S CRITICISM.

|                                                                      |    |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Buckle's shortcomings in Metaphysic . . . . .                        | 75 |
| Parker's criticism of Buckle's book-plan . . . . .                   | 76 |
| His criticism of the list of authorities . . . . .                   | 77 |
| Of the theory that natural phenomena originate terrorism in religion | 81 |
| Greece and India : Food, physique, and psychosis . . . . .           | 84 |
| Effect of climate in selecting types . . . . .                       | 88 |
| Methods of human breeding : Greek degeneration . . . . .             | 89 |
| The Greek acceptance of oriental dogmas . . . . .                    | 91 |
| The Christian doctrine of hell : its derivation . . . . .            | 92 |
| The Question of Race . . . . .                                       | 95 |

## CHAPTER IV.

## SOME ACADEMIC CRITICISMS.

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |     |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| § 1. PROFESSOR FISKE'S : <i>Academic Brow-beating</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | 98  |
| § 2. MR G. A. SIMCOX'S : <i>Academic Accuracy</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | 111 |
| § 3. MARK PATTISON'S : <i>Academic versus Academic</i> . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | 118 |
| —The question of race—Method in history-writing—The<br>question of absolute and relative truth—Mr Balfour's argu-<br>ment—Knowledge and emotion as historic factors—Pattison's<br>pessimism—Comte and Spencer on Ideas <i>versus</i> Feelings—<br>The mutual influence of England and France—Buckle's view<br>of Pattison's criticism—A compromise. |     |

## CHAPTER V.

## PESCHEL'S CRITICISM.

|                                                                                                                         |     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| § 1. Peschel's complete misconception of Buckle's main propositions<br>—The economic influence of food supply . . . . . | 137 |
| § 2. The question of earthquakes and superstition . . . . .                                                             | 139 |

## CONTENTS.

xi

|                                                                                                                                 | PAGES |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| § 3. The Asiatic origin of cholera . . . . .                                                                                    | 141   |
| § 4. The superstition of sailors and miners . . . . .                                                                           | 142   |
| § 5. The diets of the ancient Egyptians: orthodox use of Biblical testimony: the limitations of specialism in Germany . . . . . | 143   |
| § 6. Hindu psychology . . . . .                                                                                                 | 146   |

## CHAPTER VI.

### VORLÄNDER'S CRITICISM.

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |     |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| § 1. THE GREEKS AND ROMANS . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | 147 |
| Why excluded from Buckle's Surveys.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |     |
| § 2. ENGLISH AND GERMAN DEVELOPMENT . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | 148 |
| Forms of Freedom Contrasted: Deduction and Induction.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |     |
| § 3. ENGLISH POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | 154 |
| "Protection" and Aristocracy: Nullity of Vorländer's solution.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |     |
| § 4. SCOTTISH DEVELOPMENT . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 157 |
| Scotch Superstition and Consistency: Disregard of Hume and Smith: The People "demotic" rather than democratic or Liberal.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |     |
| § 5. FRENCH INFLUENCE ON GERMAN DEVELOPMENT . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | 160 |
| Buckle's statement justified: Justice to Gottsched: Lessing and Goethe: Testimonies as to French influence all round.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |     |
| § 6. SPANISH HISTORY . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | 175 |
| Buckle's estimate justified: His exaggerations.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |     |
| § 7. CAUSES OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | 177 |
| Vorländer's misconceptions: Buckle on the causes of the Revolution, literary and social: Science and democracy: Vorländer's thesis as to moral influences not a confutation of Buckle: Inadequacy of his method of explaining history: The question of <i>laissez-faire</i> : incompleteness of Buckle's treatment of it in his Introduction: Effects of State aid to culture in Germany: Centralisation in France. |     |
| § 8. MORAL FORCES IN THE FRENCH REVOLUTION . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | 186 |
| Vorländer's account of the causes of the Revolution ends in explaining moral shortcoming in terms of itself: his attack on the philosophers: Buckle's attitude towards them: Vorländer's final estimate: Sermonising <i>versus</i> scientific sociology: German optimism <i>versus</i> English.                                                                                                                     |     |

## CHAPTER VII.

### SOME CHARGES OF IGNORANCE.

|                                                                                     |     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| § 1. SIR HENRY MAINE'S: Concerning Hindu foods . . . . .                            | 192 |
| § 2. The <i>Quarterly Review</i> 's: Concerning earthquakes in Italy, etc. . . . .  | 197 |
| § 3. MR H. H. BANCROFT'S: Concerning the Civilisations of Ancient America . . . . . | 202 |
| § 4. PROFESSOR INGRAM'S: A Comtist Caprice . . . . .                                | 208 |



## CHAPTER VIII.

## SOME SPECIALIST CRITICISMS.

|                                                                                                                                     | PAGES |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| § 1. PROFESSOR FLINT'S. <i>The Retort of Presbyterianism</i> . . .                                                                  | 213   |
| § 2. MR GLADSTONE'S. <i>The Retort of Anglicanism</i> . (Concerning the State of the Clergy under Charles II.) . . .                | 229   |
| § 3. PROFESSOR MASSON'S. <i>The Retort of Scottish Sentiment</i> . . .                                                              | 250   |
| § 4. DR HILL BURTON'S. <i>The Endorsement of Scottish Historiography</i> . . .                                                      | 253   |
| § 5. DR HUTCHISON STIRLING'S. <i>Philosophy in a Temper</i> . . .                                                                   | 255   |
| § 6. DR DROYSEN'S. <i>The Protest of Transcendentalism</i> . Vindication of Buckle's theory in application to ancient history . . . | 261   |
| § 7. M. LITTRÉ'S. <i>The Claims of Comtism</i> . Buckle's originality vindicated. Force of one of Littré's criticisms . . .         | 265   |

## CHAPTER IX.

## LOGICAL AND ETHICAL ISSUES.

|                                                                                 |     |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| § 1. MILL'S CRITICISM. <i>The Measure and Causation of Moral Progress</i> . . . | 269 |
| § 2. LANGE'S CRITICISM. <i>Moral versus Intellectual Factors</i> . . .          | 279 |
| § 3. FISCHER'S CRITICISM. <i>The Problem raised afresh</i> . . .                | 283 |
| § 4. MR VENN'S CRITICISM. <i>Statistics and Natural Law</i> . . .               | 285 |

## CHAPTER X.

## THE ANTI-SCIENTIFIC VIEW OF HISTORY.

|                                                                  |     |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| § 1. BISHOP STUBBS'. <i>Antiquarianism and Clericalism</i> . . . | 293 |
| § 2. MR. GOLDWIN SMITH'S. <i>Orthodox Pragmatism</i> . . .       | 300 |
| § 3. MR. FROUDE'S. <i>The Method of Popular Rhetoric</i> . . .   | 305 |

## CHAPTER XI.

## BUCKLE'S REAL ERRORS.

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |     |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| § 1. Conspectus of those already suggested . . .                                                                                                                                                                                             | 324 |
| § 2. His treatment of "the Protective Spirit": his obvious pre-suppositions: adopted from the Smithian economics: their logical inadequacy: His concrete failure to explain French courses under and after Louis XIV.: the true explanation: |     |

## CONTENTS.

xiii

### PAGES

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                             |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>The cases of Augustus and Leo X. : The case of Spain under Charles III. : Evocative <i>versus</i> repressive Protection: Monarchs bad judges : But misdirection no proof of impossibility of right direction : Proof in Buckle's own admissions : Causes of progress of the sceptical spirit in France and England : Buckle's formula inadequate : Psychological Revulsions : Overlooks the spontaneous imitativeness of mankind : Effects of the militarism of Louis XIV. : Literary and scientific names overlooked by Buckle : An age of criticism : The reign of Louis XV. confutes Buckle's view of the reign of Louis XIV. : Real causes of English freedom last century : Buckle's patriotism : Wrong comparisons . . . . .</p> <p>§ 3. His doctrine of intellectual <i>laissez-faire</i>. Purely <i>à priori</i> and deductive where induction obviously necessary : Mere expansion of Adam Smith : Analysis and refutation of Smith's generalisations : Buckle confuted from his own Commonplace-Book : His Smithian view adopted late and hastily : His view irreconcilable with the facts of American and German culture, as generalised by himself : Criticism of his view of German political capacity and American culture : The true explanations in both cases : Buckle's unbecoming attack on unendowed literary men : Effect of acting on his principles : Literature, art, and science to be left to men with inherited incomes : Candolle's investigation of the social sources of men of science . . . . .</p> <p>§ 4. Buckle's "Administrative Nihilism"; Biassed criticism of politics as compared with other arts or sciences : Mankind progresses through great errors to errors less and less great : Buckle's "blind spot" : Parallel case of Mr Spencer . . . . .</p> <p>§ 5. Errors in detached propositions : Small proportion of his errors to his sound matter . . . . .</p> | <p>324-342</p> <p>342-360</p> <p>360-362</p> <p>362-365</p> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|

## CHAPTER XII.

### THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIOLOGY.

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                        |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>§ 1. ENGLISH SOCIOLOGY BEFORE BUCKLE . . . . .</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">The Scotch School of Last Century : Godwin, Mary Wollstonecraft, Paine, Owen : Bentham and his School : Hallam : Malthus : Newenham, Lowe, Patterson, Moreton, Mackinnon : The <i>Laissez-faire</i> School : Doctrine of Parsimony : Its Opponents : James Mill, Thirlwall, Grote : Torrens : Macaulay and Carlyle.</p> <p>§ 2. COMTE . . . . .</p> <p>§ 3. SPENCER . . . . .</p> <p>§ 4. SIR HENRY MAINE. . . . .</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">1. His Patriarchal Theory : Attack on the French Philosophers : Historic Value of the Pentateuch . . . . .</p> | <p>366</p> <p>372</p> <p>378</p> <p>392</p> <p>393</p> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|

|                                                                                                                                                                                              | PAGES   |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| 2. His Collapse as a Theorist . . . . .                                                                                                                                                      | 402     |
| 3. His Self-Contradictions on Progress : Fallacies as to Greek<br>and Roman Ideas of Law ; Self-Stultification of his Criticisms<br>of Democracy ; Personality ; Causes of Success . . . . . | 404-420 |
| § 5. GERMAN SOCIOLOGY TO SCHÄFFLE.                                                                                                                                                           |         |
| 1. Progress Last Century . . . . .                                                                                                                                                           | 420     |
| 2. Herder ; Lessing ; Kant . . . . .                                                                                                                                                         | 421     |
| 3. Fichte . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                          | 425     |
| 4. Hegel . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                           | 426     |
| 5. W. von Humboldt . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                 | 426     |
| 6. Heeren . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                          | 428     |
| 7. The Classical Investigators : Diesterweg ; the Ethnologists . . . . .                                                                                                                     | 430     |
| 8. Marx and Collectivism : Economic Determinism . . . . .                                                                                                                                    | 432     |
| 9. Schäffle . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                        | 434     |
| § 6. MINOR FRENCH SOCIOLOGISTS.                                                                                                                                                              |         |
| 1. The Nineteenth Century Revival : Thierry, Sisimondi,<br>Guizot, Ortolan, Charles Comte . . . . .                                                                                          | 440     |
| 2. Saint Simon and his School : Fourier compared with Owen . . . . .                                                                                                                         | 441     |
| 3. Guizot . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                          | 443     |
| 4. Charles Comte . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                   | 444     |
| 5. Proudhon . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                        | 445     |
| 6. De Tocqueville . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                  | 446     |
| 7. Fustel de Coulanges . . . . .                                                                                                                                                             | 450     |
| 8. Renan . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                           | 452     |
| 9. Taine . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                           | 453     |
| § 7. MINOR ENGLISH SOCIOLOGISTS SINCE BUCKLE.                                                                                                                                                |         |
| 1. Bagehot . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                         | 456     |
| 2. Mr Lecky . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                        | 458     |
| 3. John Stuart Mill . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                | 460     |
| 4. Professor Mahaffy . . . . .                                                                                                                                                               | 462     |
| 5. Freeman : Rogers . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                | 466     |
| 6. The Anthropologists and Economists : Professor Sidgwick :<br>Mr Seal : Mr Ritchie : Sir James Stephen, &c. . . . .                                                                        | 468     |
| 7. Dr Draper : Rationalism and Sociology . . . . .                                                                                                                                           | 469     |
| 8. Mr B. Kidd . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                      | 470     |
| 9. Mr C. H. Pearson . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                | 472     |
| 10. Mr Wake : Mr Crozier : The Duke of Argyll . . . . .                                                                                                                                      | 473     |
| § 8. LE PLAY . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                       | 474     |
| § 9. LETOURNEAU AND THE FRENCH PRÉCIS-WRITERS . . . . .                                                                                                                                      | 483     |
| § 10. PRESENT-DAY CONTINENTAL SOCIOLOGY.                                                                                                                                                     |         |
| 1. Professor Gumplowicz . . . . .                                                                                                                                                            | 488     |
| 2. Professor von Lilienfeld : M. Novicow : M. Worms . . . . .                                                                                                                                | 492     |
| 3. M. Tarde : Theory of "Imitation" . . . . .                                                                                                                                                | 495     |
| 4. Professor Ferri : Marxism . . . . .                                                                                                                                                       | 495     |
| 5. M. Worms : Social Science and Social Art . . . . .                                                                                                                                        | 497     |
| 6. Professor Pulszky . . . . .                                                                                                                                                               | 498     |
| § 11. MR LESTER WARD . . . . .                                                                                                                                                               | 504     |

# CONTENTS.

XV

## CHAPTER XIII.

### BUCKLE'S PERSONALITY. CONCLUSION.

PAGES

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |         |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| Necessity of studying a man's work in the light of his temperament, training, and physique : Buckle not a trained literary man : Lacked variety of practice : Frail health from childhood : Long delay of his education : Extraordinary rapidity when begun : Lack of intercourse with equals : His gift one of understanding, not of perfect utterance : His enormous range : Mastery of science : His strong affections : Bereavements and sinking of strength : His impassioned temperament : Accounts of him in private life : Imagination and science : His estimates of the poets : His passionate revolt against persecution : His charity and his <i>laissez-faire</i> : His attitude to rationalism in religion : Dissimulation in middle-class English life : His forward-looking ideas in science : His detail knowledge and power of arrangement : His chess-playing ; His pathetic self-criticism. Final estimate. His unequalled service to historical science . . . . . | 518-548 |
| APPENDIX. SYNTHETIC SUMMARY . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | 549-555 |
| INDEX . . . . .                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | 557-565 |



## INTRODUCTION.

PROBABLY no historical work of a scholarly and philosophical kind, if we except a few books such as Strauss's "Life of Jesus," has had such a wide and rapid celebrity as was won by Henry Thomas Buckle's "Introduction to the History of Civilisation in England," when its two volumes were published, at a few years' interval (1857-1861) a generation ago. Among reading people it caused as much talk, though of course it had not such an enormous popular sale, as Macaulay's "History"; and of the two books Buckle's made the deeper and stronger impression among thinking people, alike in England and abroad. It was closely followed by a book similarly inspired, but independently written,<sup>1</sup> the "History of the Intellectual Development of Europe," by Professor J. W. Draper of New York; and as regards simple popularity the books have had perhaps nearly equal fortune,<sup>2</sup> being speedily translated into most of the European languages. But though Draper emphasised strongly the doctrine of physical causation, which he held in common with Buckle, and was on the whole not less revolutionary in his criticism of life, the stress of discussion of their principles has from first to last fallen almost wholly on Buckle. This is doubtless partly owing to the fact that Draper chose to leave his book quite devoid of the support of evidential references, thus failing to challenge or impress the scholarly class,

<sup>1</sup> In publishing his first edition (1861), Dr Draper writes :—"In the Preface to the second edition of my 'Physiology,' published in 1858, it was mentioned that this work was at that time written. The changes that have been since made in it have been chiefly with a view of condensing it."

<sup>2</sup> Dr Draper's note to his revised edition (1875) states that "many reprints" of the book had then been issued, "and translations published in various languages—French, German, Russian, Polish, Servian, &c."

where Buckle gave a wealth of references hardly to be seen in any work of the day ; but there is also implied a superiority on Buckle's part in weight of metal, scope, and energy of personality—in short, in genius. Thus, wherever the two books have gone, his has made the greater impression and the greater intellectual ferment. Dr Mackenzie Wallace, in his work on "Russia," tells of the astonishment with which, in the seventies, he found in the little book collections of several Russian peasants one of the four<sup>1</sup> Russian translations made. Among the educated Russians of the time, the interest in Buckle was proportionately keen, their prevailing desire being at once to acquire knowledge and to reduce it to scientific form. Buckle's work, as this traveller says, had for them a powerful fascination. "It seemed at first sight to reduce the multifarious conflicting facts of human history to a few simple principles, and to evolve order out of chaos." The British traveller felt bound to protest.

"During the first year of my residence in Russia, I rarely had a serious conversation without hearing Buckle's name mentioned ; and my friends almost always assumed that he had succeeded in creating a genuine science of history on the inductive method. In vain I pointed out that Buckle had merely thrown out some hints in his introductory chapter as to how such a science ought to be constructed, and that he had himself made no serious attempt to use the method which he commended. My objections had little or no effect : the belief was too deep-rooted to be easily eradicated."<sup>2</sup>

It is instructive to note at the outset, from such a testimony, the nature at once of the applause and of the opposition to Buckle. The educated Russians, coming to European sociology with open minds, unencumbered by prejudice and traditional systems, found him luminous and illuminating. He thus had his success with the open-minded. The opinionated people, British and other, resisted him because he disturbed either their own formulas or their conviction that there could be no formula ; and they dis-

<sup>1</sup> We have this on Dr Wallace's authority. *Russia*, pop. ed., p. 110. So also Mr Huth, *Life of Buckle*, Bibliography.

<sup>2</sup> Work cited, p. 110.

paraged him often in the fashion of Dr Mackenzie Wallace, without argument, without accuracy, without scruple. The critic, it will be seen, allows in one breath that the book as a whole "seemed to evolve order out of chaos," and in the next affirms that it only threw out a few hints of scientific method in its introductory chapter, doing nothing to apply them afterwards. Even without reading the book, one may detect the animus and the confusion here. It was very natural that such incoherent criticism should fail to impress intelligent and unprejudiced foreigners.

But critics who have equally failed to master the alphabet of coherent judgment have been able by mere volubility to injure to some extent the credit of a great dead man. Hence, after Buckle's rapid conquest of fame, there has gone on a mining process of discredit. The book has always gone on selling: no book still in print keeps up its price better in the second-hand market; and yet it is seldom that a critical reference is now made to Buckle which is not either disrespectful or faint in its praise. This would seem to show, to ordinary judgment, that his book had become quickly popular by reason of being shallow, and that studious readers had found this out, while the ignorant multitude continued to believe in him. An able writer, it is felt, is likely to be recognised as such by the general run of his critics. It is to countervail this assumption in the case of Buckle, however, that the following chapters are written.

And it will perhaps be admitted at the outset that a great deal depends, in a critical case of the kind, on the fashion in which a given book has challenged established opinion, on the kind of opinion challenged, and on the intellectual circumstances of the time. Scientific doctrines of various kinds, and artistic experiments of various kinds, are seen to fare well or ill in different periods. Thus the "realism" of modern painting and fiction is but a return to methods which have been more or less successfully followed in the past, and then for a time abandoned; while such a teaching as the undulatory theory of light, for



instance, had to fight for a generation against a prejudiced conservatism; and such a rediscovery in social science as that of the matriarchate, thrown out more than a hundred years ago by one Scotch sociologist,<sup>1</sup> remained entirely unappreciated among us in the present century till it was independently made afresh by another in our own generation. Much depends on the implications of the new doctrine, on its source, on the conditions of criticism, and, above all, on the capacity of the mind of the time to adapt itself to it. Let us see, then, what it was that Buckle sought to do.

Not one or two but a dozen writers have asserted that he claimed to set forth the whole process of civilisation and state all the laws of it. Nothing could be more untrue. He tells us, indeed, with a pathetic candour, how in his confident youth he cherished some such dream; and some of his earlier chapters still bear traces of it; but he expressly declares that, having learned to measure his resources, he undertakes only to write the History of Civilisation in England, and to that end to set forth introductively a few of the main laws of civilisation in general; and his actual book, unfortunately entitled in the current edition, "Buckle's History of Civilisation," is but a portion of the general introduction planned for his main work on English civilisation, which he did not live even to begin. It is easy to point to physical and socio-economic factors which he overlooked or ignored. Though he was a close student of economics, he does not seem to have made any special survey of the reaction of Money on civilisation, which has since been made the subject of a sociological treatise.<sup>2</sup> He did not even note, as Draper has done,<sup>3</sup> how the peculiar regularity of the conditions of Egyptian agriculture rein-

<sup>1</sup> Millar, in his *Origin of the Distinction of Ranks* (1771), ch. i. The idea had been earlier indicated by Ferguson, *Essay on the History of Civil Society* (1767), p. 125; and it was accepted by Dunbar, *Essays on the History of Mankind* (1780), p. 54.

<sup>2</sup> *Money and Civilisation*. By A. Del Mar. Bell & Sons, 1886.

<sup>3</sup> *Intellect. Devel. of Europe*, ed. 1875, i. 84-88.

forced the effect of the mere fecundity of the soil<sup>1</sup>; though he expressly remarked<sup>2</sup> on the failure of Montesquieu, Hume, and Charles Comte to note the effect of climate on regularity of habits. Similarly he ignored speculation on geological data, such as the notable suggestion of Poe<sup>3</sup> that planetary life may progress relatively to the successive variations in the solar influence on the earth. His plan was properly historical, and he gave quasi-patriotic reasons for choosing to make English civilisation his theme, asserting broadly that the growth of opinion had been freer in England than in any other country. It is not necessary here to estimate closely the accuracy of that generalisation;<sup>4</sup> but it may be suggested that the reception given to his own book has illustrated the difficulty of knowing how far opinion anywhere is "free." German critics have protested that in England there has long been much less of scholarly freedom, that is in the universities, than in Germany; and this is in large part true. There is in Germany a broad gulf, as Buckle himself pointed out, between the specialist class and the lay public; and the most independent inquiries have been carried on by theological professors, without any thought of their effect on the orthodox laity. On the other hand, the most trivial offences against Catholic orthodoxy, in the journals or on the lecture platform or in private life, are to-day punishable by brutal sentences of imprisonment. In England the facts all round are very different. Public discussion of religion,

<sup>1</sup> Draper shows that the need for a central regulation of the Nile overflow was further a special force for political unification.

<sup>2</sup> Three-vol. ed., i. 43, *note*.

<sup>3</sup> *Eureka*, in Ingram's ed. of Poe's Works, iii. 151. Poe's suggestion connects with Kant's theory of grades of planetary life relatively to distance of planets from the sun. See his *Allgemeine Naturgeschichte und Theorie des Himmels*.

<sup>4</sup> It coincided with Guizot's:—"Ainsi la jeune civilisation du Nord grandit, en Angleterre, dans la simplicité comme avec l'énergie de sa propre nature, indépendante des formes empruntées et de la sève étrangère qu'elle reçut ailleurs de la vieille civilisation du Midi. Ce fait puissant . . . a déterminé peut-être le cours des institutions politiques de l'Angleterre."—*Shakespeare et son Temps*, éd. 1852, pp. 37-38.

despite occasional outbursts of persecuting bigotry, proceeds freely; while in the universities, dominated as they are by the ecclesiastical interest, there has never been any such freedom of research in religious matters as prevails, or at least did long prevail, in Germany. Scholarly results thus reach England a generation in arrear, though there is the compensation that they are more widely disseminated. And though, as we shall see, Buckle has not been any more assimilated in Germany than in England, he has been resisted in England by the whole weight of the ecclesiastical university interest, a force which operates both solidly and subtly, solidly by direct hostility and suppression, subtly by affecting the opinion of semi-rationalists of moderate originality. Not the least mischievous of the attacks on Buckle's work have been made by professedly emancipated men of letters of his generation, a body of men of considerable distinction and numerical strength, but not remarkable for innovating courage, or consistency, or scientific precision and grasp. It is not unlikely that he will be more competently and more justly appreciated in the generation following.

But an influence such as is here asserted must be traced in detail if the assertion is to hold good. And first we have to note that Buckle not only challenged forcibly the prevailing tone and method of his day in the matter of historical interpretation, but impeached the types of scholars who took such matters in hand. While not only just but generous in his recognition of all good work in the historical field (he praises Macaulay and Carlyle and Hallam with equal geniality), he set up a standard of qualification for the business which positively none of his contemporaries could meet. The ordinary view taken by historians of their business, he pointed out, was that they had just to relate events and make occasional reflections on them.

"According to this scheme," he observes, "any author who from indolence of thought, or from natural incapacity, is unfit to deal with the highest branches of knowledge, has only to pass some years in reading a certain number of books, and then he is qualified to be an

historian." . . . "Historians, taken as a body, have never recognised the necessity of such a wide and preliminary study as would enable them to grasp their subject in the whole of its natural relations. Hence the singular spectacle of one historian being ignorant of political economy; another knowing nothing of law; another nothing of ecclesiastical affairs and changes of opinion; another neglecting the philosophy of statistics, and another physical science; although these topics are the most essential of all, inasmuch as they comprise the principal circumstances by which the temper and character of mankind have been affected, and in which they are displayed."<sup>1</sup>

It will be found instructive to keep these remarks in mind in considering the attacks on Buckle hereinafter discussed. There is perhaps not one of his critics who is not impeached by them; and it is not taking a strained view of human frailty to say that men so impeached are likely, as a rule, to indemnify themselves for a criticism they cannot rebut by passing others in a spirit more of retaliation than of rectitude.

But no less sure to call out hostility were the main theses of Buckle's work. He was really proposing, albeit only broadly and not in systematic detail, to begin the reduction of all human affairs to the principle of natural law. Now, though attempts of this kind had been made in antiquity alongside of attempts at a valid physical science, and although famous writers, as Vico and Montesquieu, had done something to reduce the phenomena of societies to natural law,<sup>2</sup> at a time when even chemistry and geology were far from being scientifically grasped, the mere complexity of the problem, and its specially close contact with religious prejudice, have kept it in its pre-scientific condition for the mass of educated people down till our own day. There was, indeed, a remarkable movement of sociological science in Scotland and Germany last century, following on

<sup>1</sup> *Introduction to the History of Civilisation in England*, 3-vol. ed., i. 3-4.

<sup>2</sup> In particular, theories of the influence of climate on character were common in antiquity. Compare Vitruvius, vi. 1; Vegetius, *De re militari*, i. 2; Servius on Vergil, *Aeneid*, vi. 724. In modern times the theory was common long before Montesquieu.

<sup>3</sup> For a good summary view of the work of Vico and Montesquieu, see Mr Huth, *Life of Buckle*, i. 233-243.

the great and diverse stimuli of Montesquieu and Rousseau. Hume's sociological essays are among his best. Ferguson<sup>1</sup> at points expressly resisted the *a priori* method of Rousseau, which was in part followed by Montesquieu and D'Alembert; Millar<sup>2</sup> and Dunbar<sup>3</sup> applied Ferguson's methods in some detail, and arrived at some solid results; Monboddo<sup>4</sup> is admitted to have anticipated much of the method of the later anthropology; and even Kames, writing his "Sketches of the History of Man" with haste in his old age, helps to the same end. In Herder's "Ideas on the Philosophy of the History of Mankind," again, we have one of the classics of sociology, an eloquent and ingenious effort, on theistic lines, towards a cosmical view of human development. But the reaction after the French Revolution seems to have arrested this as well as other movements of critical and scientific thought for two generations. Herder's book was well translated into English in the year 1799, and a second edition was called for in 1801; but the impulse went no further, and the translation was never reprinted.<sup>5</sup> It seemed as if the forward-looking people of that time were crushed out by the triumph of the animal instincts of strife and reaction. Buckle was thus, as it were, resuscitating a buried movement and reviving a forgotten interest; and the academic discussion of the subject in England began as if *de novo*, in almost complete disregard of what had been thought and said in the previous century. We find, for instance, Mr Goldwin Smith, then Regius Professor of History at Oxford, exhibiting entire ignorance of the most famous exposition of the theistic

<sup>1</sup> *Essay on the History of Civil Society* (1767).

<sup>2</sup> *On the Origin of Ranks, &c.* (1771).

<sup>3</sup> *Essays on the History of Mankind* (1780).

<sup>4</sup> *Origin and Progress of Language* (1773-1792).

<sup>5</sup> Even in Germany it had only reached a fourth edition in 1841; and it was not translated into French till 1827 (by Quinet). Little known in France previously (see Madame Quinet's *Edgar Quinet avant l'Exil*, 1887, p. 95), Herder yet seems to have helped to inspire Charles Comte's excellent *Traité de Législation* (1826), which goes over much of Herder's ground with greater precision.

theory of a gradual religious education of mankind. In the preface to his two lectures on the Study of History (1861), he lays it down that "Coleridge, the greatest of English divines, as well as one of the greatest of English philosophers, propounded most distinctly, and in the same pages with the most fervent Christianity, views of Christianity which are now imagined to be new and startling discoveries, the exclusive property of an anti-Christian school. In his 'Friend' (Vol. iii. Essay 10) he treats all history as an education of the mind of the race, and shows the part which the great nations of antiquity played in the process." And the Professor goes on to say that Dr Temple had been charged by anti-Christian writers with borrowing this idea from the teachers of their school, and that the charge, "ignorantly made," had been "ignorantly believed." Yet the Professor was himself evidently unaware of the existence of the deist Lessing's little book, "Die Erziehung des Menschengeschlechts,"<sup>1</sup> in which, to mention no other, the idea had been set forth while Coleridge was a child. The truth is that that particular idea has chronically recommended itself to Christians in all ages, when no other means seemed to suffice to meet rational criticism of their creed.<sup>2</sup> That was, in fact, the immediate ground for the polemic of Mr Goldwin Smith. Oxford, of course, would represent the most belated thought of the time; and of course a great advance has been since made in scientific thought in general; but the scientific view of life is still far from normal, in Oxford or out of it. Not only do the Churches still recognise "the overruling hand of Providence" in School Board and other elections, as well as in pestilence and drought, but all English Governments profess to invoke the supervision of Deity in their acts and

<sup>1</sup> Yet this had been translated into English a year or two before (1858).

<sup>2</sup> Thus Mr Gladstone has lately taken credit to his faith for anticipating evolutionism because Eusebius produced the *Præparatio Evangelica*, though the doctrine of the Gospels was that the world was about to end, and Cyprian held that it was visibly growing old. Naturally, Mr Gladstone did not dwell on the fact that the Eusebian idea was adapted from the Montanist heretics, through Tertullian.

deliberations ; the House of Commons is daily opened with prayer ; and "Dieu protège la France" is still the legend on the French coinage, equating with the "Gott mit Uns" of Germany. Granted that much of this is gross hypocrisy or quackish formalism, it cannot be but that the constant habit of irrationalism unfits men for living all at once in the cool air and dry light of reason.

Personally, Buckle was so much of a Theist,<sup>1</sup> and at times even of a sentimental Theist, that he might be supposed to have disarmed that instinctive hostility with which religiously-minded readers always tend to meet a rationalist writer ; but, on the other hand, he was too explicitly hostile to orthodox methods. In so many words he contemned "our Bridgewater Treatises, our Prize Essays, and such schoolboy productions,"<sup>2</sup> which, at the time he wrote, were the typical teachings of clerical sociology ; and indeed the emphasis and the plainness with which he attacked the theological view of history in his opening chapters were such that no later conformities could save him. "All the vicissitudes of the human race," he declared, "must be the fruit of a double action—an action of external phenomena upon the mind, and another action of the mind upon the phenomena. These are the materials out of which a philosophic history can alone be constructed."<sup>3</sup> Even the quasi-metaphysical cast given to the formula here could not avail to conciliate the metaphysical section of the university world, for it was followed up by an express demonstration that metaphysical methods were worse than useless in the interpretation of history.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It is noteworthy that Draper also is gratuitously Theistic. See his work, as cited, i. 21, 22, 74, 140 ; ii. 245, 314, 400. Yet he too has necessarily had a strong anti-religious influence. See too his work on the *Conflict between Religion and Science*.

<sup>2</sup> Three-vol. ed., iii. 284.

<sup>3</sup> Ed. cited, i. 20.

<sup>4</sup> Buckle gave high praise to Kant as a thinker, but after quoting from him so as to show that he "saw that the phenomenal reality of Free-Will is an indefensible doctrine," observed that "as the present work is an investigation of the laws of phenomena, his transcendental philosophy does not affect my conclusions" (i. 38). The "high priori" philosopher and the preacher were thus equally scandalised.

And that there might be no standing-ground for political theology in his schema, he set about showing, in some detail—first, that the beginnings of civilisation depended, above all things, on external or material conditions; next, that men's religious interpretation of the cosmos depends primarily on their external conditions; next, that their higher progress in thought and science is the outcome of a later application of the earlier material and other results in a sphere in which Nature is less powerful, and so calls forth the powers of men; and yet further, that all progress in civilisation is thus seen to have been the result of additions to knowledge, not at all of direct moral teaching, supernatural or other. Where the theological teacher—that is, the ordinary thinker—sees in history this or that exhibition of “divine favour” and “divine chastisement,” this iconoclast tersely specifies this or that reaction of outside Nature on mind, or of mind on outside Nature. And whereas the theological conception of sin and backsliding involves a constant asseveration of the verbal abstraction “Free-Will,” Buckle, avowedly putting aside the metaphysical discussion, proceeds to treat Will in general, in phase after phase, as a term of a sequence like any other, peculiar only in respect of its antecedents and activities. He thus disallows the theological method of comment, once for all, in the abstract and in the concrete; and though he makes the extremely inconsistent concession of describing the Hebrew and Christian religions as in themselves superior to the ages in which they were promulgated,<sup>1</sup> his insistence on the impotence of religious teaching to improve a people not already prepared for it leaves him in sharp practical antagonism to the theological spirit. “The religion of mankind,” he says in so many words, “is the effect of their improvement, not the cause of it.” And in the concrete cases of Spain and Scotland, with which he dealt at length, he argued with merciless persistence, and with an endless array of proofs, that the religious spirit had only wrought for incivilisation and unhappi-

<sup>1</sup> I. 255-9.



ness, blighting alike domestic life, culture, and national lustre.

It was a matter of course that such teaching should be widely and angrily opposed in a country where all the higher education, roughly speaking, was under ecclesiastical control. The demonstration against Spain and Scotland implied only too evidently a criticism of all forms of ecclesiasticism; and the flushed and vituperative revolt of the religious consciousness against all that disturbs its transcendental dream must needs play strongly in the case of a powerful and learned writer who not only said these things but said them boldly, confidently, even contemptuously. But Buckle disturbed not merely the ecclesiastical and university-ruling class, with its merely ecclesiastical conception of sociology; he disturbed equally the literary class which, while abandoning the theological method, had arrived at no system of its own. Roughly speaking, save for the partially systematic and united action of the Comtist school, who have appropriated the title of Positivist, and for the incomplete sociological work of Mr Spencer, there has been among the non-theological English historians and historico-sociologists of the past generation nothing approaching to a coherently scientific way of thinking, logically differentiated from the older ways. Hallam (in some respects the most powerful judgment of all), James Mill, Macaulay, Grote, Froude, Freeman, Finlay, Bishop Stubbs, Professor Seeley, Green, Mr Morley, Mr Leslie Stephen, Mr Lecky—no one of these has faced the problem of framing or holding by a scientific system of historical interpretation. They have commented more or less intelligently and acutely, but more or less at random, on the phases of political and culture history with which they have dealt. Some have been intermittently obscurantist. Mr Freeman avowed that in religion he walked by faith,<sup>1</sup> though he treated most history non-religiously; Macaulay stood fast in his clear, common-sense empiricism; Mr Froude capriciously modu-

<sup>1</sup> *Historical Essays*, i. 35.

lated on the anti-scientific key-notes of his master, Carlyle; Bishop Stubbs once in a while intones a nugatory reflection from the pulpit; the sympathetic Green never had the leisure, if he had the wish, to work out a philosophy or science of his subject; James Mill, with many gifts for the task, did not rise to it; even Grote never attained to a sociological method, where Thirlwall had glimpses of it; and Mr Lecky has never quite seen the forest by reason of the trees. The late Professor Seeley again, with all his precision and reflection, has seen in history rather a racial than a social problem, rather an imperial than a human question; and, living abreast of a great movement of social inquiry, has apparently not perceived the enormous alteration made in the political problem by the new ideals; while, for the rest, "Ecce Homo" and "Natural Religion" give the measure of his cosmic philosophy. From such a thinker we could have no large or deep philosophy of human progress.<sup>1</sup> When we come, finally, even to such cultured writers as Mr Morley and Mr Stephen, who typify so much of current intelligence, yet do so little to reorganise it, we are conscious of an incompatibility between their minds and Buckle's. Writers content with a method of mere brilliant commentary, in spheres where a comprehensive method is so necessary, are sure to oppugn a writer who above all things represented comprehensive method. If he is right, they are wrong; so they naturally seek to show that he is wrong.

Those who have more or less identified their thinking with Comte's, again, are equally committed to disregarding Buckle. One such theory as Comte's, made rigid as a science by being welded to an iron scheme or plan for society, cannot combine with another, especially if that other be more strictly Positivist than itself. Or we might put it that, inasmuch as Comte did offer a mould for society to a generation concerned about finding a new

<sup>1</sup> He writes: "Now, modern English history breaks up into two grand problems, the problem of the Colonies and the problem of India."—*Expansion of England*, p. 175. Not a word of the social problem.

mould, he has a certain propagandist advantage, even though his mould is impossible, over a rival theorist who offered none; and will secure disciples who are sure to harden into partisans if they stay with him at all.

As regards the great historical output of Germany, again, it does not appear that interpretative science has kept pace with the accumulation and restatement of detail knowledge. The *a priori* German philosophies of history, from Hegel to Bluntschli, exhibit their lack of scientific basis in their careers. These abstract and verbalist systems have their vogue in turn, passing for durable formulas with successive generations, and passing away before other formulas, like one year's leaves before the next. The historical workers, on the other hand, do not supply the generalising ideas. Neither the all-learned Ranke, with his enormous range and his excellent judgment, nor the doctrinary Mommsen, with his mastery of his own province, yields us a historical science. If Germany has not accepted Buckle, neither has she superseded him.

Finally, it is in keeping with the course of scientific development that Buckle's sketch of a scientific historical method should fail to dominate the thinking of his generation—of his contemporaries, that is, and their immediate successors. For he was in effect proposing to reduce to science the sphere of opinion hardest of all to bring under exact test and measurement, and this at a time when even the science of geology was not assimilated by the cultured class, while a comprehensive biology was not so much as formulated. He wrote, it must always be remembered, before Darwin published the "Origin of Species." Now, in logical course, a complete grasp of law in social life can only be conceived as following on a grasp of law in animal life. During three hundred years, step after step has been taken by educated Europe towards a completely scientific view of the cosmos; and each step in turn has been vehemently resisted by religious feeling, which specially embodies the principle of fixation in ideas. The Copernican astronomy and the

Newtonian physics were in their day of propaganda utterly repugnant to prevailing opinion. When, after generations of confused progress, they had been assimilated by orthodoxy, there was little resistance—save that of professional routine—to a scientific treatment of chemistry, since that dealt with a set of ideas altogether outside ordinary religious thinking; but the scientific method in geology was angrily resented, because that plainly clashed with the theological habit of thought and speech, as well as with the sacred books. And scarcely had the educated world adjusted itself to geology as unquestionable science, when Buckle came forward with his challenge on the field of social history; while just on his heels came Darwin, with the biology that horrified a sanhedrim which had supposed itself settled for life in an incomplete geology. It was alike natural that Buckle should at first be as much discussed by the literary and clerical class as was Darwin, and that afterwards he should be in a manner dropped from vital discussion; while the scientific class, dealing with the more definite and more manageable problem raised by Darwin, went on working closely at that till Darwin's point was gained, and his name was once for all identified with exact science. For a similar treatment of Buckle there was no machinery, no set of specialists. For the subtler and more complex task, there was available not more, but less, of scientific labour-power—that is, far fewer exact students; while the doctrine in this case was met by a virtually organised opposition, a vast endowed interest, whose credit, status, and reason for existence were called in question by the new teaching. The theological and literary class were finally fain to leave Darwin to the experts, only a few of whom had a pecuniary interest in running him down; but they took Buckle to be their own province; and they have pretty well had their way with him ever since.

To do the university-ruling class justice, it has in its own way sought to rise to the scientific level of the time, inasmuch as its current treatment of history, while neces-

sarily devoid of comprehensive scientific method, is much more critical and careful than of old. Thus, though rather more by reason of German and French than of English work, the material for such special surveys as Buckle effected in his Introduction is every year being added to. Ancient and modern history are now studied with much more precision than of old, even by our theologically-trained writers; and Bishop Creighton's name is added to that of Bishop Stubbs. All this accumulation of competent monographs ought to facilitate the great task of interpreting history as a whole, so that it may be held as part of a philosophic conception of man's universe. But, on the one hand, the mere accumulation of detail will never of itself produce a science of history; and, on the other hand, detail itself is always imperfectly understood for lack of the "shaping spirit" of generalising thought. And as nothing can hinder that an ecclesiastical organisation shall be unscientific in the main,<sup>1</sup>—as it is impossible that bishops, however scholarly and accomplished, can be scientific all round in their survey of life; and as the spirit of documents and detail can easily end in leaving us with less of broad comprehension of history than before,—it is more than ever necessary that what has been accomplished in that direction should be insisted on: that the great gift of Buckle to his time shall no longer be thrust aside in the name of a specialism which is too often only a form of philosophic incompetence. There are a hundred truths in Buckle which could throw light on the path of the ordinary student, and show him the way to more; there are being produced every year books that remain superficial and unprofitable for want of such a method as he applies and

<sup>1</sup> One prominent illustration of the effect of religious training on the faculty of historical judgment is supplied in Dr Hodgkin's copious history of *Italy and Her Invaders*. That writer vaunts his adherence to the view that "both as to the building up and as to the pulling down of the world-Empire of Rome, we have a right to say, 'It was, because the Lord God willed it so'" (Work cited, ii. 546). And this edifying philosophy of history is disseminated by the Clarendon Press. None but an English University would to-day endorse such writing.

implies in his special surveys of the histories of France, England, Scotland, and Spain, and in his general doctrine as to the rise of civilisations. University-bred writers, with their eyes fixed on minor problems of archæology, reduce historic study to that plane, or, when they introduce general ideas, repeat those of the pulpit and the clerical lecture, platitudinous reflections which blunt the edge of judgment and paralyse inquiry. Even such a scientific and illuminating work as Professor Pulszky's "Theory of Law and Civil Society," in some respects one of the most original and suggestive of modern works on the philosophy of history, might have gained in breadth and scope from an assimilation of Buckle, whom Pulszky has never once mentioned, though he is profuse of praise for Maine, whose most characteristic doctrine he has perforce to set aside. And on the most general survey of the problems of human evolution, one is struck by the fact that, for lack of progressive study on the lines of Buckle, men are coming to the discussion of the new biological apriorism of Weismann without any just idea of the bearings of historical evidence on the question. Yet it would be easy to show that Weismann, patient worker as he has proved himself, is much more speculative, arbitrary, and radically incomplete than Buckle ever was, though Buckle had his shortcomings.

Once the importance of a general method, a conception of causation in history, is granted, there need be no quarrel over mere shortcomings in theory and argument, on the part of a pioneer. Such shortcomings are inevitable. It would be unreasonable to deny that Buckle's credit has suffered like that of other men from his own faults, his own mistakes. Perhaps no man has been more blamed for mistakes which he did *not* make—we shall see enough and to spare of such charges—but mistakes of estimate and lapses of logic he did undoubtedly commit; and it is not here contended that his powerful fragment, rich as it is in material for future workers, is of itself a flawless scientific classic, destined to stand unshaken alongside of later work done with riper experience. But what great innoyating

work ever did so stand? Montesquieu in a certain sense does; and in that sense Buckle is probably as sure of what we call literary immortality as Montesquieu. He is as readable, as virile, as various. For the rest, it is the destiny of all explorers to be superseded as mere teachers by the regiments of surveyors who follow where they forced their way. Nothing is commoner, as we shall see, than an invidious disparagement of Buckle as beside Darwin. And yet nothing is more certain than that Darwin's exposition is imperfect, is bound to be superseded. A man is to be tried by what he did, not by what he did not do. Buckle, raising some problems which he did not solve, while solving others of a more manageable kind, is not to be discredited for the non-solution any more than Darwin; and even if he had given a radically wrong solution, which I do not think he often does, he could not be further out than was Newton in some matters of physics and all matters of historiography.

Let us take, for illustration, Buckle's treatment of the phenomenon of statistical regularity in crimes, suicides, and acts of forgetfulness, year after year. The proposition was not raised by him: the fact had been noticed and discussed by others before,—by Mrs Somerville, for instance, as he notes; and he took it as he took many previous generalisations—Malthus's on population; Lyell's on the effect of earthquakes on superstition; Davis's on the effect of cheap food among the Chinese; Robertson's and Dunbar's on the climatic limitation of the early American civilisations, and on the lessened influence of climate in the secondary civilisations—merely relating it to a general body of historical explanation. But in this case of the statistics of "fortuitous" acts he left the problem as he found it, merely citing the fact of the regularity as a proof that all human actions in the mass exhibit Law. Now, a student may fairly complain that in such a case either the nature of the law ought to be indicated or the impossibility of stating it confessed. Buckle's course was hardly the best; for though he quite openly avowed that while "uniformity has been detected,

the causes of the uniformity are still unknown";<sup>1</sup> and though he rightly defined a law of nature as "merely a generalisation of relations," he yet allowed himself to use language about "the prodigious energy of those vast social laws" in question, which was certainly confusing and inappropriate, and might well account for the "panic" which, as Mr Venn notes,<sup>2</sup> was produced in some quarters by his comments in particular. Even here, however, as we shall see, the objections made to his propositions are at times as overstrained as his way of putting them; and he was all the while affirming the very reasonable though too abstract doctrine that "*in the same stage of society* the same crimes [or suicides, and so forth] are necessarily reproduced." The faults of statement must be admitted to account in some degree for rejection and reaction; but they must not be exaggerated or taken *in vacuo*. Buckle was bent on hammering into the general intelligence the fact that all action is a result of measurable motives, of antecedents, of the process of nature; and to bring that home to the average mind without excesses of emphasis and undue breadth of expression was not easy.

Even when he is tried on the important count of his positive prescription or plan of action, it is easy to be unfair to Buckle as compared with other innovators. In respect of his uncompromising attitude to the "principle of Protection," and his implied approval of *laissez faire* in politics, he may be accused of failing to turn his social science to any great constructive account, of failing indeed to carry his social science to its logical conclusions just where conclusions become most important. But it is to be remembered, first, that Buckle wrote exactly when the optimism of *laissez faire* was most plausible; secondly, that he never ignored the principle of population; and, thirdly, that failure to frame an art of society as carefully as a

<sup>1</sup> I. 32. A few pages before, on the same theme (p. 28), he had written: "The causes of this remarkable regularity I shall hereafter examine," but he never did so. The flaw is thus, perhaps, one of inadvertent omission.

<sup>2</sup> *Logic of Chance*, 2nd ed., p. 236.



science of society is a kind of shortcoming which no class of theorist escapes. Darwin entirely failed to relate his biology to a scientific sociology, uttering in that direction mere empiricism; and, supposing Buckle to have been wrong in turn, he is certainly not more completely wrong than Mr Spencer, who is pronounced a great thinker and a solid performer by critics who give Buckle no credit for solidity or insight. Buckle's *laissez faire* is just Mr Spencer's *laissez faire*. I will not here discuss whether it is better to have no constructive plan or to have a quite unworkable one, such as Comte's. It is more profitable to reflect that the best brain in the world can only add a particular quota of truth to the sum-total of knowledge, and that when such an addition has really been made, the service far outweighs any correlative disservice in the way of disinclining some men to see fresh truth. He who is confirmed in inaction or resistance to action by any teaching of Buckle or Mr Spencer would have been at best statically conservative; and it is not certain that the dynamic Conservative is to be reckoned the more dangerous organism, from the point of view which sees danger in conservatism. On the other hand, it is not to be believed that the assimilation of Buckle's treasure of knowledge and reason, all imperfect as it is in terms of his whole project, will leave any man less fit to realise the greatness and the pressure of the problem of social reconstruction, seen in these days to be the problem of problems for all nations. If we are to compare disciplines and preparations, it will not be hard to see that a course of Buckle is a more civilising thing than a course of anything in the nature of scientific historical teaching now available in the universities. It will hardly leave a man holding, as the late Professor Secley taught, that the two grand problems for the student of modern English history are "the problem of the Colonies and the problem of India." It will not leave him accepting the barrack-room dogmas of a Bismarckian Gneist as the end of the study of constitutional history. In the chapters of the "Introduction" there is the breath of

a nobler spirit, the perspective of a greater thought than that. Nor will that spirit and that thought leave a man nugatorily shrugging his shoulders, with Macaulay and some later men, over the idea that the movement of mankind can ever be broadly and philosophically conceived. At this moment, with all the affectation of having buried Buckle that prevails in the literary world, there are hundreds of non-literary men who can testify how he has taught them to regard history in an enlightened and reflective fashion, and so to resist the hundred-and-one forces which war on intellectual liberalism—the force of Chauvinism, the force of class conservatism, the force of cheaply sophisticating Irrationalism,<sup>1</sup> the force of disguised supernaturalism,<sup>2</sup> all seeking to capture the reason by a show of concession to its habits. And such readers of Buckle have, as judges, an advantage and a claim over a great many of those who have oppugned him, in that they have actually read him, and read him with the desire of learning what he had to say. When all is said, a lack of these preliminary conditions will serve to account for not a little of the detraction from Buckle's reputation. But that is the point now to be proved.

<sup>1</sup> E.g., Mr Kidd's *Social Evolution*.

<sup>2</sup> E.g., Mr Drummond's *Natural Law in the Spiritual World*.



# BUCKLE AND HIS CRITICS.

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## CHAPTER I.

### GENERAL DISPARAGEMENTS.

§ 1. "THE present generation," said a reviewer about ten years ago, "is not at all inclined to over-estimate Buckle"; meaning, I suppose, that it is inclined to under-estimate him; and we shall see plenty of evidence for the statement. I should prefer to say that it is the talking or writing section of our generation that makes light of Buckle, for his book appears to be in more steady demand at this moment than almost any historical or philosophical work of his time; but there can be little doubt that it is the literary fashion to depreciate him. Mr Grant Allen, in an ecstatic passage in his book on Darwin,<sup>1</sup> specifies as one of the effects of the publication of the great naturalist's theory, that "Buckle was exploded like an inflated wind-bag." The context, to say nothing of the extract, is sufficiently extravagant; but more remarkable than the mere terms of the judgment on Buckle, is the fact that it comes from a gentleman who had shortly before edited an issue in two volumes of the miscellaneous writings of the exploded wind-bag in question. I do not think that the promiscuous emptying-out of Buckle's note-books was a judicious proceeding in itself; but one would have thought that in any case literary decorum prescribed that the work of arranging them for

<sup>1</sup> In the "English Worthies" Series, p. 198.

an abridged edition, elicited by the constant demand,<sup>1</sup> should not be undertaken by a writer who held, and was soon publicly to say, that the careful and finished work of the author was so much antiquated rubbish. If the "Introduction to the History of Civilisation in England" is only fit for the waste-basket, it is difficult to understand how Mr Allen could, without damage to his self-respect, consent to edit a revised edition of the historian's commonplace books; or how he could so recently have let him off with even the damnatorily faint praise of the designation, "a great, suggestive, nebulous thinker."

§ 2. With Mr Allen's ejaculation of contempt one cannot well deal critically; but there is no lack of more responsible hostile criticism of Buckle. Here is Dr Tylor's:—

"The late Mr Buckle did good service in urging students to look through the details of history to the great laws of Human Development which lie behind; but his attempt to explain, by a few rash generalisations, the complex phases of European history, is a warning of the danger of too hasty an appeal to first principles."<sup>2</sup>

Dr Tylor presumably meant, not that an "attempt" to explain history by rash generalisations is a "warning" of the danger of making "too" hasty an attempt at any sort of explanation, but that Buckle's generalisations have been shown to be rash, and that he thus furnishes a proof that theorists run a risk of making rash generalisations. The confusion and ineptitude of the sentence go far to suggest that the accomplished specialist had not thought out the question of Buckle's merits, as he had certainly not followed his words, with any such attention as he is wont to give to the matters on which he speaks; especially seeing that he has offered no exposition of his judgment. It thus has substantially the air of that familiar conservatism which leads so many capable inquirers to uncritically reject exegetic methods which lie outside their own natural walk.

§ 3. In this way it was that the late Dr John Hill

<sup>1</sup> Though the abridged edition has gone into the remainder market, the first maintains a high price, as does the author's great work.

<sup>2</sup> *Researches into the Early History of Mankind*, 3rd ed., *Intro.*, p. 4.

Burton deprecated the notion that history could be constructed from what are called "pre-historic" remains.

"The project of founding a theory of distinct grades of progress on the deposits left in the earth by each race in succession has a resemblance to, but no conformity with, the doctrine of the successions of strata which the geologists have been so successful in identifying through the organic deposits. It is not always safe to take analogies from the laws of the material world and apply them to men, with their self-will, their command of the whole world of reason and skill, and their inexhaustible varieties of character. The rise of one man pre-eminent in command for war or peace—the existence of a great inventor, would entirely break through the best-constructed laws founded on such data. In fact, nothing less is arrived at, if we carry out this theory, than that Positivism in the disposal of human affairs, after which Comte, Buckle, and others have laboured in vain. . . . It is true that a curious uniformity of mechanical production has been shown to prevail in regions far distant from each other. But . . ."<sup>1</sup>

Here, while giving the geologists over-liberal credit for certainty of results, the historian yet takes up towards the work of anthropologists pretty much the attitude Dr Tylor holds towards Buckle; and he would probably have included the former in his general protest. Such questions are not to be so settled.

§ 4. As little are they to be settled by such offhand deliverances as that of Darwin, who, meeting Buckle and feeling humorously overwhelmed by his talk, and liking his book, yet wrote—<sup>2</sup> "I doubt whether his generalisations are worth anything." There was in Darwin a certain genial density, a certain limitation of the range of vision; and his way of dismissing Buckle's theories, of the value of which he really could not judge, was just other men's way of dismissing Darwin. One of his own critics, noting how he decided that flint arrowheads were "angular fragments broken by ice action," and how he disposed of mesmerism, observes, for once with justice, that "it is at least interesting to find Mr Darwin turn his back on others, precisely as others turned their backs on him."<sup>3</sup> His sociology was

<sup>1</sup> *History of Scotland*, i. 130.

<sup>2</sup> *Life of Charles Darwin*, i. 74; ii. 110, 386.

<sup>3</sup> Dr. J. H. Stirling, *Darwinianism* (1894), p. 144.

certainly not as progressive as his biology, though with his gift of candour and conscientiousness he might have advanced indefinitely on that line if his studies in it had been systematically pursued. As it was, he merely gave his first thought on theories which needed as much side-research as his own.

§ 5. But while Buckle is thus for one set of critics a neck-or-nothing theorist, seeking above all things to reduce history to formulas, for another set he is a student of vast erudition, lacking the formulating faculty altogether. Thus, on the Comtist side, M. Wyruboff decided that

“Ce qui manquait à M. Buckle, et ce qui manque à tous ceux qui possèdent de nos jours une erudition vaste, c'est la classification de leur savoir, c'est cette vue d'ensemble qui n'arrive que comme résultat de la filiation naturelle des divers ordres de phénomènes.”<sup>1</sup>

§ 6. And Macaulay in a manner combines both views, when in the slippered ease of his “Diary” he complacently finds reasons for his sense of superiority to his distinguished contemporary.

“*March 24, 1858.*—I read Buckle's book all day and got to the end, skipping, of course. A man of talent and of a good deal of reading, but paradoxical and incoherent. He is eminently an anticipator, as Bacon would have said. He wants to make a system before he has got the materials ; and he has not the excuse which Aristotle had, of having an eminently systematising mind.”<sup>2</sup>

“What he liked best in Buckle,” says Mr Trevelyan of his uncle, “was that he had some of the faults of Warburton.” It scarcely needed this genial revelation to let us see that in 1858 Macaulay had passed, if he had ever touched, the stage in which he could have given a patient and fair-minded estimate of Buckle's book. The paradoxical tribute to Aristotle, who, if any man ever did, “made systems before he had got the materials,” is significant of the spirit in which, “skipping, of course,” he approached the case, denying Buckle the systematising

<sup>1</sup> *M. Stuart Mill et la Philosophie Positive* (published with M. Littré's *Auguste Comte et Stuart Mill*), p. 84.

<sup>2</sup> Trevelyan's *Life and Letters*, chap. xiv. one-vol. ed. (1881), p. 673.

mind in the act of reproaching him for being prematurely systematic. But that criticism is only one of the many proofs of Macaulay's strangest shortcoming, his inability to see any high merit in the works of his contemporaries.<sup>1</sup> It was in 1850 that he wrote in his Diary :

"It is odd that the last twenty-five years, which have witnessed the greatest progress ever made in physical science,—the greatest victories ever achieved by man over matter,—should have produced hardly a volume that will be remembered in 1900, and should have seen the breed of great advocates and Parliamentary orators become extinct among us."<sup>2</sup>

The last ten of the twenty-five years in question had seen Bright rise to fame and Gladstone rise to power, alongside of orators like Stanley and O'Connell ; and had witnessed the production of a full third of Tennyson's choicest work, of Browning's "Pippa Passes" (not to speak of "Paracelsus"), of Clough's "Bothie," of much of the poetry of Mrs Browning, of eight novels of Dickens, the last (1850) being "David Copperfield"; of "Barry Lyndon," "Vanity Fair," and "Pendennis" (1850); of "Wuthering Heights" and "Jane Eyre"; of half of Grote's "History of Greece"; of Carlyle's "French Revolution," "Sartor Resartus," and "Cromwell's Letters and Speeches"; of the whole work of Poe; and of Hawthorne's "Twice Told Tales" and "Scarlet Letter" (1850). This verdict, in which Macaulay seems to have parted with all his judgment, is not a passing aberration. In 1852 he could again write that "Uncle Tom's Cabin," though "powerful and disagreeable," was "on the whole the most valuable addition

<sup>1</sup> Sir George Trevelyan frankly avows that "Macaulay had a very slight acquaintance with the works of some among the best writers of his own generation. He was not fond of new lights, unless they had been kindled at the ancient beacons; and he was apt to prefer a third-rate author, who had formed himself after some recognised model, to a man of high genius whose style and method were strikingly different from anything that had gone before. In books, as in people and places, he loved that, and that only, to which he had been accustomed from boyhood upwards." The nephew passes a just and weighty criticism on his uncle's idiosyncrasy, and cites the comment on Buckle as an illustration of it.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, chap. xii. p. 523.



that America has made to English literature";<sup>1</sup> and yet again, in 1855, he felt that "the general sterility, the miserably enervated state of literature, is all in my favour."<sup>2</sup> There was, indeed, enervation enough, but not more than had prevailed in periods which to Macaulay were classic. He was simply blind to almost all contemporary originality, a singular defect in a man of so much practical magnanimity and goodness of heart, and such vast range of literary knowledge; but a defect that cannot be denied. His depreciation of Buckle is thus on all-fours with his depreciation of his contemporaries in general—an *ipse dixit* of which the authority is annulled. For the rest, it is in painful contrast with the generous praise which Buckle accorded to Macaulay<sup>3</sup> as to every able man of his time.

§ 7. A comparatively judicial, or at least deliberate, utterance is the following, with which Mr Edward Clodd opens a work designed to popularise some of the results of modern anthropology:—

"It is barely thirty years ago since (*sic*) the world was startled by the publication of Buckle's 'History of Civilisation,' with its theory that human actions are the effect of causes as fixed and regular as those which operate in the universe; climate, soil, food, and scenery being the chief conditions determining progress.

"That book was a *tour de force*, not a lasting contribution to the question of man's mental development. The publication of Darwin's epoch-making 'Origin of Species' showed wherein it fell short; how the importance of the above-named causes was exaggerated and the existence of equally potent causes overlooked. Buckle probably had not read Herbert Spencer's 'Social Statics,' and he knew nothing of the profound revolution in silent preparation in the quiet of Darwin's home; otherwise, his book must have been rewritten. This would have averted the oblivion from which not even its charm of style can rescue it. Its brilliant but defective theories are obscured in the fuller light of that doctrine of descent, with modifications, by which we learn that external circumstances do not alone account for the widely divergent types of men, so that a superior race, in supplanting

<sup>1</sup> *Life*, as cited, p. 573.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 618. Compare, however, his leaning to a different view in reaction against Mill, *ibid.*, p. 671.

<sup>3</sup> *Introduction to the History of Civilisation in England*, three-vol. ed., i. 394, note.

an inferior one, will change the face and destiny of a country, 'making the solitary place to be glad, and the desert to rejoice and blossom as the rose.' Darwin has given us the clue to those subtle and still obscure causes which bring about, stage by stage, the unseen adaptations to requirements varying a type and securing its survival, and which have resulted in the evolution of the manifold species of living things. *The notion of a constant relation between man and his surroundings is therefore untenable.*

"But incomplete as is Buckle's theory, and all embracing as is Darwin's, so far as organic life is concerned, the larger issue is raised by both, and for most men whose judgment is worth anything it is settled. Either man is a part of nature or he is not."<sup>1</sup>

What Mr Clodd means by saying here that Darwin, in the "Origin of Species," set forth causes of social evolution which Buckle overlooked, and showed Buckle to have exaggerated the causes he noted, I am entirely at a loss to understand.<sup>2</sup> I can therefore only criticise the statement by saying that it seems to me absolutely baseless. No less puzzling, but more open to analysis, is the proposition that "the notion of a constant relation between man and his surroundings is untenable." Either Mr Clodd means to assert that the relation between man and his surroundings *varies*, which is precisely what Buckle taught; or he means to assert that there is not a continuous state of relation between man and nature at all; and this he must be held to mean, since otherwise he does not controvert Buckle at all. Yet after all, Mr Clodd concludes (p. 139) that there is an "*undisturbed* relation of cause and effect," of which the "*continuity* involves the inclusion of man as a part of nature." It is those displays of incompetence on the part of his assailants that send thinking people back to Buckle—where, as a rule, the assailants themselves do not seem to have spent much time. If Mr Clodd knew much of his subject he would not, for one thing, have risked the proposition that Buckle "probably had not read" any one book of importance issued in his day. He had read all

<sup>1</sup> *Myths and Dreams* (1885), pp. 3-4.

<sup>2</sup> Can it be that Mr Clodd holds to the fallacious theorem of sexual selection, and that he holds that to explain any or all of the phases of culture-history?

that was published of the "First Principles," which he was one of the first to praise as it deserved.<sup>1</sup> He had further read Darwin's "Journal of Researches," which he pronounced to be "one of the most valuable books ever published on South America";<sup>2</sup> and after he had published what exists of his book, he read and was greatly impressed by the "Origin of Species," exhorting a friend to read it and master it, as it was "full of thought and of original matter."<sup>3</sup> But these are minor matters. It is also a comparatively small matter that Mr Clodd should speak of the "Social Statics" as if *that* were a "lasting contribution" to sociology as against the "Introduction," when in point of fact it is in strict truth a series of *tours de force*, vitiated by deism, and so indefensible in some of its main positions, so irreconcilable in large part with its author's later teachings, that he long allowed it to remain out of print, and only republished it with qualifications. But it is a serious matter that in dismissing Buckle in the fashion he does, Mr Clodd should give an account of the book he condemns which entirely misrepresents its character. To say explicitly and implicitly that Buckle represents "external circumstances" as "alone" accounting for "progress," for the "widely divergent types of men," and for civilisation in general, is to raise a doubt whether the speaker ever had Buckle's book in his hands. The titles of the first five chapters of the "Introduction to the History of Civilisation in England" are as follows :—

I. STATEMENT OF THE RESOURCES FOR INVESTIGATING HISTORY, AND PROOFS OF THE REGULARITY OF HUMAN ACTIONS. THESE ACTIONS ARE GOVERNED BY MENTAL AND PHYSICAL LAWS, THEREFORE BOTH SETS OF LAWS MUST BE STUDIED, AND THERE CAN BE NO HISTORY WITHOUT THE NATURAL SCIENCES.

II. INFLUENCE EXERCISED BY PHYSICAL LAWS OVER THE ORGANISATION OF SOCIETY AND OVER THE CHARACTER OF INDIVIDUALS.

<sup>1</sup> He goes out of his way to praise it in his "List of Authors quoted," and he speaks of it with the highest admiration in a footnote, three-vol. ed., iii. 364.

<sup>2</sup> I. 101, *note*.

<sup>3</sup> Huth's *Life and Writings of Buckle*, ii. 28.

III. EXAMINATION OF THE METHOD EMPLOYED BY METAPHYSICIANS FOR DISCOVERING MENTAL LAWS.

IV. MENTAL LAWS ARE EITHER MORAL OR INTELLECTUAL. COMPARISON OF MORAL AND INTELLECTUAL LAWS, AND INQUIRY INTO THE EFFECT PRODUCED BY EACH ON THE PROGRESS OF SOCIETY.

V. INQUIRY INTO THE INFLUENCE EXERCISED BY RELIGION, LITERATURE, AND GOVERNMENT.

The book then goes on to examine the origin of history and the state of historical literature in the middle ages, and then to present "outlines" of the history of the English, French, Scotch, and Spanish "intellect" since the Middle Ages. It is hard to see how, glancing at these chapter-headings, Mr Clodd could come to that view of Buckle's drift which he has presented to his readers. One is constrained to assume that his general judgment on Buckle's work is but an echo of that of Dr Tylor, taken on trust without independent inquiry; as his opinion on Buckle's style, and his phrase about the inconstancy of the relation between man and his surroundings—indeed, nearly every point in his judgment—are apparently equally dutiful echoes of Mr Leslie Stephen. In reviewing the criticism of Buckle by the latter writer, we shall have occasion to estimate the value of Mr Clodd's in the matter of the depreciatory comparison of Buckle with Darwin, and the unqualified panegyric of the great naturalist.

Before leaving Mr Clodd, however, it may be profitable to note how he, who surmises Buckle to have ignored important factors in human development, formulates his own complete account of the case:—

"We may speak of myths as fossil ethics and fossil theology, but, with more appositeness, as embryonic ethics and theology, since they contain potentially all the philosophies and theologies 'that man did ever find.'" "Thus the study of myth is nothing less than the study of the mental and spiritual history of mankind."<sup>1</sup>

That is to say, we are studying "nothing less than" the mental and spiritual history of mankind when we study

<sup>1</sup> *Myths and Dreams*, p. 138.

myth to the exclusion of non-mythical evidence as to early custom, early art, early law, and early use of implements—a proposition which may safely be left to the judgment either of specialists or of general readers. As for the account of myths as “potentially” containing all subsequent philosophies and theologies, it is about as useful as it would be to say that the habits of the pre-human animal are “embryonic ethics and theology,” since all philosophies and theologies are “potentially” contained in the thinking faculty of any member in the line of descent, whether before or after the attainment of articulate speech, just as any organism is “potentially” contained in the embryo. The term “myths” either means the totality of known myths, or any myth or set of myths in particular. If the latter, the proposition would resolve itself into the helpful one that any one myth potentially contains all others. If the former, the thesis amounts to this:—That (*a*) we have record of all myths that have been, and (*b*) that all possible philosophies and theologies found embryonic expression in myth during the (or *a*) myth-making period, this being, so to speak, the only really originitive period in human thought. On this view either there is (1) a definite number of philosophic or theological concepts, which were successively arrived at by (or in) the process of myth-making, and to which no addition was possible when men ceased to make myths; or else (2) all philosophies and all theologies are but so many modifications of one philosophic or religious concept, which was expressed the moment primitive man could construct a myth. The second interpretation takes us back to the serviceable theorem that any one myth potentially contains all others. The first implies the notions that (*a*) men went on acquiring distinct abstract concepts so long as they were in the myth-making stage, but ceased to do so when they were able to adopt more rational methods of explaining phenomena; and (*b*) that the seeming acquisition of new philosophic and religious ideas in the post-mythological period was in reality

only a development of ideas already implied in myths. And perhaps we might on this head also arrive at the proposition that the first non-mythical philosophic doctrine contained "potentially" all doctrines arrived at since. The whole statement on analysis tumbles to nihility. If Buckle had been guilty of such futile verbalism as this, such hasty generalisation of what constitutes "the mental and spiritual history of man," there would be some pretext for denying him permanent importance.

§ 8. It is perhaps but fair to Mr Clodd to say that his mistaken notion of Buckle's performance seems to be held by him in common with men whose business it is to give accurate accounts of such matters, and with men of some reputation for exactitude. Turning to such a specialist compilation as that entitled "Methods of Teaching History,"<sup>1</sup> I find<sup>2</sup> in a bibliography drawn up by Professor F. W. Allen of Wisconsin University, the following bald note to the titles of Draper's "Intellectual Development of Europe" and Buckle's "Introduction":

"Draper and Buckle write from the point of view of the controlling influence of physical causes."

Here again it is difficult to believe that the writer ever had in his hands either of the works mentioned. While in a measure verbally accurate, he in effect misleads his readers by his formula. As we have seen, the very titles of Buckle's first six chapters practically negate the statement made. A few pages earlier,<sup>3</sup> in the same volume with Professor Allen's bibliography, another writer remarks that, "As for Greece, it is no exaggeration to say that he who does not understand its physical conformation can have no proper conception of its political history," and refers the reader to Professor Conrad Bursian's essay, "Ueber den Einfluss der Natur des Griechischen Landes auf den Charakter seiner Bewohner." It would be much more

<sup>1</sup> Published as the first volume of the "Pedagogical Library," edited by G. Stanley Hall. Boston: Ginn, Heath & Co., 1883.

<sup>2</sup> Part III., p. 15.

<sup>3</sup> Part II., p. 203.

justifiable to say of this writer that he always contemplated history "from the point of view of the controlling influence of physical causes," though he is here writing only on "Physical Geography and History," than it is to so describe Buckle, who expressly puts forward another view. But no reader of any fairness would draw such an inference even here. The judgment passed on Draper is equally misleading. Though he does at the outset strongly and rightly insist on the "control of physical agencies over organic forms," including man, he teaches no less explicitly than Buckle that in different culture stages the effects of climate are reversed, and that mind overruling nature yields the greatest civilisations.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, he does almost nothing with his climatic doctrine after his opening chapters, and his book in large part studies intellectual development from the point of view of the controlling influence of the *knowledge* of physical causes, which is a totally different thing from what is suggested by Professor Allen's statement. The virtual misrepresentation can only be set down to one of two causes—either to that clerical or religious bias which vitiates so much of what has been written about Buckle, or to simple lack of judgment. Professor Allen's naïve way of ticketing some well-known books—as when he intimates that Bagehot's "Physics and Politics" "analyses the causes of progress," and says of Friedrich Schlegel's books that "these old works are still unsurpassed in their field," and puts the "Esprit des Lois" as "a work of great insight, first published in 1748"—suggests the latter explanation.

§ 9. But writers of undeniable ability, and of reputed freedom from religious bias, err as badly about Buckle as Professor Allen has done. The late Mr Walter Bagehot, in his "Physics and Politics,"<sup>2</sup> speaks like the average sciologist of "Mr Buckle's idea that *material forces* have been the main-springs of progress, and *moral causes* secondary, and, in comparison, *not to be thought of*." Mr Bagehot, too, it would

<sup>1</sup> Work cited, ed. 1875, i. 27, 85.

<sup>2</sup> In the International Scientific Series, pp. 10, 11.

appear, had either never read or had forgotten his Buckle. At best he has hopelessly confused Buckle's distinction between *moral feeling* (or conscientiousness of *purpose*) and *knowledge* (or, as Buckle put it, the *moral* and *intellectual* elements in mental movement) as co-operating forces in human progress. The "Introduction" certainly lays stress on the superior value, in this sense, of intellectual to moral activity in bringing about right conduct; but so far is it from setting *material* above *moral* forces in the sense in which Mr Bagehot uses the words [moral = mental], that it affirms precisely the opposite of the higher or European civilisation in general. As thus—

"The advance of European civilisation is characterised by a diminishing influence of physical laws; and an increasing influence of mental laws. . . . It becomes clear that of the two classes of laws which regulate the progress of mankind, *the mental class is more important than the physical*. . . . A discovery of the laws of European history is resolved, in the first instance, into a discovery of the laws of the human mind. These mental laws, when ascertained, will be the ultimate basis of the history of Europe; *the physical laws will be treated as of minor importance.*"<sup>1</sup>

And again—

"The reader must . . . be satisfied for the present with what, I am conscious, is merely an approach towards demonstration, and the complete demonstration must necessarily be reserved for the future volumes of this work, in which I pledge myself to show that the progress Europe has made from barbarism to civilisation is entirely due to its intellectual activity; that the leading countries have now, for some centuries, advanced sufficiently far to shake off the influence of those physical agencies by which, in an earlier state, their career might have been troubled. . . . So that, in a great and comprehensive view, the changes in every civilised people are, in their aggregate, dependent solely on three things—first, on the amount of knowledge possessed by their ablest men; secondly, on the direction which that knowledge takes—that is to say, the sort of subjects to which it refers; thirdly, and above all, on the extent to which that knowledge is diffused."<sup>2</sup>

And the proposition is further repeated.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I. 156-7.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 224-5.

<sup>3</sup> Pp. 227, 288. *Cp.* pp. 154, 156, 200, &c.



Mr Bagehot was perhaps thinking of Buckle's demonstration of the all-importance of physical causes as regards the *beginnings* and some *failures* of civilisation, as in Asia, Africa, Mexico, and South America. To physical conditions the historian traced the rise of civilisation in Egypt, India, Mexico, and Peru ; by the overpowering energy, the "unmanageability" of brute Nature, he explained the entire absence of autochthonic civilisation in Brazil, as he set down the lack of autochthonic civilisation in America, north of the twentieth parallel, to the absence of the combined conditions of heat and irrigation ; and to the abundance of cheap food he ascribed the abjection of the Indian and Egyptian peoples. He was thus, perhaps, inexact in some of his later general phrases as to the relative importance of factors ; but, as we have seen, he *did* very plainly assert that, in the secondary civilisation of Europe, mental forces tend to supersede physical. Mr Bagehot, like so many others, ignorantly or thoughtlessly misrepresented him. Nothing, indeed, has struck me so much in the investigation of the criticism passed on Buckle as the sheer ignorance of his book on the part of most of his assailants.<sup>1</sup> Not one in twenty seems to have studied him with any attention ; and, as we shall see, the most pretentious of them have misrepresented him to a degree rare in modern literature.

§ 10. Another and more elusive method of disparagement is that instanced in the characteristic judgment of the late Mr Arnold, where misrepresentation does but flavour censure:—

"Now, no doubt, it is possible to be a fanatical partisan of light, and the instincts which push us to it ; a fanatical enemy of strictness of moral conscience, and the instincts which push us to it. A fanaticism of this sort deforms and vulgarises the well-known work, in some respects so remarkable, of the late Mr Buckle. Such a fanaticism

<sup>1</sup> "Entre autre résultats de cette escrime [over Buckle] ce n'était pas le moins remarquable, à notre avis, que l'on pût savoir à quoi s'en tenir sur les opinions de l'auteur sans connaître l'auteur lui-même." "Le Positivisme dans l'Histoire," by Louis Etienne, in *Revue des Deux Mondes*, 15 Mars. 1868, p. 371.

carries its own mark with it, in lacking sweetness ; and its own penalty in that, lacking sweetness, it comes in the end to lack light too."<sup>1</sup>

One cannot but admire here, as so often elsewhere, the suave skill with which Mr Arnold, without a word of demonstration, damns an uncongenial figure to the outer darkness of his distastes. But this is not the place to follow Mr Harrison in comment on the tastes which accepted nothing that was not "sweet," and which thus stored for us so much of sweetness with so little of light. It is in a volume from which he was a good deal given to quoting that there is to be found the hint : "Out of the *strong* [at times] cometh forth sweetness." But the other sort of sweetness, too, has its charm and exemplary virtue, and Mr Arnold might have taught other foes of Buckle lessons in dispraise.

§ 11. He kept himself, for instance, on safer ground than that taken up by Mr John Morley, when he, by way of joining the general cry against Buckle, remarks of the volume written by Harriet Martineau and H. G. Atkinson that it indeed points to Evolution, but only

"as the once famous 'Vestiges of Creation' points towards the scientific hypotheses of Darwin and Wallace, or as Buckle's crude and superficial notions about the history of civilisation pointed towards a true and complete conception of sociology."<sup>2</sup>

Arnold kept to vague depreciation ; Mr Morley makes bold to be explicit. And see the result. It is safe enough, of course, to pooh-pooh Miss Martineau and Mr Atkinson and Robert Chambers, because other writers have written books which do better what they sought to do. The general run of readers have so little sense of moral and intellectual perspective that they actually make it a demerit in pioneer writers not to have been more than pioneers, instead of making it a merit to have pointed to anything while as yet successful exploration was not. In this attitude the public are encouraged by an authority like Mr Huxley, who evidently felt that he had more

<sup>1</sup> *Culture and Anarchy*, 1st ed., p. 172.

<sup>2</sup> Essay on Harriet Martineau, in *Miscellanies*, iii. 197.

merit in not seeing the force of the argument for Evolution till everybody but the bigots saw it likewise, than Chambers or the Germans had in seeing the truth before the proof was gross as a mountain. The errors of the unprofessional Chambers are to be charged against him to the uttermost, while the logical ataxy of the Huxleys, their want of original insight, their failure to see the essential unreason of the traditional view, their virtual acceptance of a whole creed of error, is to secure them credit for wisdom and expertness. When we find the same people continuing to make no deduction from the credit of the popularly successful innovators, the Darwins, for *their* blunders and superficialities, however flagrant, we get a new perception of the extent to which the critical verdicts of so-called scientific men conform to the tendencies which shape the prejudices of sects and nations.

But while it is thus safe to depreciate a Chambers, it is not possible even by the organon of *vae victis* to establish Mr Morley's account of Buckle, even for the general reader. Chambers is superseded by Wallace and Darwin, who contradict each other, and who singly maintained gross biological fallacies ; and Buckle is superseded by—whom ? He “pointed towards a true and complete conception of sociology.” How does Mr Morley know ? Has *he* the true and complete conception ? Has any one else ? If Mr Morley had anybody in his mind, I take it he would have mentioned him. That he was thinking of Comte, or of Spencer, or Schäffle, I shall hold to be incredible until Mr Morley affirms it. I cannot think that he would be so wanting in sense of proportion as to say that any one of these writers—or he himself or any other—has set forth a “true and complete conception of sociology,” although he *is* so wanting in caution as to suggest by implication that Wallace and Darwin have attained a “true and complete conception” of evolution, or that every one of their hypotheses is sound. And the only conclusion open is that Mr Morley, lacking the power to confute Buckle by argument, lacking knowledge on which to found a

confutation, lacking (it must be said) the scrupulousness which, without such knowledge and power, abstains from a pretence of superiority, just caught at the first bogus parallel which came to his hand by way of scoring a cheap triumph with his more incompetent readers. And if any miscarriages of Buckle entitle any man to call *his* work crude and superficial, I should be disposed to say that the critical method here employed by Mr Morley would go far to invite an even harsher imputation.

But, as we shall see, such charges as his have been made by others with some real attempt at evidence and exposition; and it is time we pass from *obiter dicta* to more responsible utterances.

## CHAPTER II.

### MR LESLIE STEPHEN'S CRITICISM.

IN the fifth volume of the "Dictionary of National Biography," Mr Stephen, who for a time edited the compilation, contributes an article on Buckle, in which he substantially reiterates the opinion expressed by him in his essay headed "An Attempted Philosophy of History," in the *Fortnightly Review* of May 1880. The purpose of the "Dictionary," it appears, is not merely to collect biographical facts but to supply critical opinions; and along with the details of Buckle's life the reader learns that, from the point of view of specialists in any branch of inquiry, he was only "a brilliant amateur," and that the result of his work is merely to "popularise the belief in the possibility of applying scientific treatment to historical problems"; his book, apart from its qualities of energy and rhetoric, being "not otherwise fruitful in positive results." One questions the propriety of thus padding out a work of reference, inevitably unwieldy enough, with scraps of speculative opinion, offered as equally important with statements of ascertained fact. But that is a side issue, and I shall simply turn to Mr Stephen's essay of 1880, which has been held to say in the most effective fashion what can be said against Buckle's claim to credit as a thinker. It is at least one of the most elaborate of the English criticisms of the "Introduction." Unfavourable—and, to my mind, unfair—as that essay is, it cannot be said to be indiscriminately hostile; and the critic may be admitted to have laid his finger on one or two of the weak places of his subject. I take leave to say, however, that it is an inadequate examination of Buckle's performance; and that the element of truth in it only serves in an

unfortunate way to gain acceptance for a summing-up which is rather a reiteration of the sentiment with which the writer begins his criticism, after admissions of a quite contrary import, than the result of any process of critical proof. In reading this, as in reading many others of Mr Stephen's very readable writings, one has a sense of listening to an intelligent thinker who has certainly a knack for showing some cause for his views, but who gives little proof that he has ever sought to satisfy himself of the consistency of his opinions with one another, and shows small concern or capacity for strict critical justice. And this, it seems to me, impairs any critic's usefulness and importance. Most English criticism, indeed, resembles Mr Stephen's in being unmethodised and essentially arbitrary; but he has the distinction of bringing a wide range of thought and a philosophic manner to bear on his work, thus at once securing confidence, raising expectations, doubly disappointing careful readers when he does ill, and doing perhaps the maximum of harm in the same case by carrying with him the more docile. Let us see how he disposes of Buckle.

§ 1. Mr Stephen begins with the proposition that Buckle's book is "left, as it were, stranded on a shore from which the tide of speculation has ebbed"; and he claims in conclusion to have "said enough to explain Buckle's failure—for I cannot doubt that it was a complete failure—to reach any valuable results. . . . He has produced less solid work than many a man endowed with a tenth part of his abilities, who has brought all his abilities to bear upon some narrow, definite, and manageable problem, and therefore really enlarged the circle of our knowledge. Buckle represents merely an aspiration for knowledge." It is the same opinion as we have in the "Dictionary" article—that Buckle is only a "brilliant amateur." Now, the first and most pressing question raised by such a judgment is this: If Buckle is only an amateur, who are the experts—not in mere historic detail, but in its science? It is, to say the least, odd that Mr Stephen does not name

a single one, if we except his laudatory reference to Comte, of which more anon. He says a great deal about the superior services rendered to scientific progress by Darwin, and about the extent to which the Darwinian theory has affected contemporary thought; but of any application of Darwinism to *Buckle's problems*, or any evidence of such work being done by other writers, his essay does not present a trace. It is an extremely easy thing to generalise as Mr Stephen does about Darwin's importance, by way of belittling other explorers of natural law: it would have been more to the purpose to show in some detail how Darwin's two principles of natural and sexual selection have either exploded or overlapped the leading generalisations of Buckle. What Mr Stephen has done, so far as I can see, is for the most part to assume that since Darwin's formulæ go further back into organic nature than Buckle's, they must have overturned them—a conclusion which is neither scientific nor plausible. It is a very spurious compliment that literary men pay to natural science when they thus echo the conventional vauntings of its cultivators. In this fashion is arising a new form of cant. Mr John Morley sententiously observes that to accept phrenology to-day stamps a man as unscientific, when, I venture to assert, he has little or no exact independent knowledge on the subject; and similarly Sir Henry Maine thought to discredit popular government by simply pointing to the anti-vaccination movement, being satisfied to hold by faith the orthodox medical view on a matter which, it was tolerably clear, he had never studied. Here we have able men simply following the fashion, and saying a thing because it is the thing to say. Mr Stephen and Mr Clodd, like many others, habitually talk of Darwin as if he had evolved the principle of natural selection without any assistance from previous speculation, when not only had he much help from the work of previous naturalists, but he borrowed the idea of the struggle for existence from Malthus, who had found it set forth by—among others—Franklin. This debt Darwin, with his usual modesty and generosity, freely

avowed. It is not the hardest workers who refuse credit to their predecessors, though Darwin certainly did small justice to Lamarck.

If we turn from the merely second-hand or at best amateur talk that commonly passes current about Darwinism to the region of scientific investigation, what do we find? That just such defects as Mr Stephen finds in Buckle are being found by biological specialists in Darwin. Buckle's "only principle," says Mr Stephen, "was that everything was accidental, and yet that some fixed laws were to be discovered as governing this confused clashing and whirling of discordant atoms."<sup>1</sup> It is difficult to say whether the clumsiness or the unfairness of the expression here is the more striking. The statement that for Buckle "everything was accidental" is a very gross perversion indeed. But this may be let pass, and the complaint let stand. What then? Precisely so are biologists beginning to say, what some non-biologists probably said or saw from the start, that Darwinism helplessly assumes all variation to be "accidental," only generalising the causes which determine survival; and that we must next have some law or laws of variation. And yet, I fancy, scientific men will not in general go about to dismiss Darwin as a failure even when they shall have found, if they ever find, the further law. Nay, they do not even deny him credit for his theory of coral islands, which they have seen cause to abandon; for they perceive that his mistaken guess was a help towards a truer. Yet almost all the detailed objections Mr Stephen brings against Buckle—of interpreting a tendency by its own formula, of empirical generalisation, of inconsistency, of explaining an organic change by the superficial phenomena, and so forth—might perhaps more justly be urged against Darwin by a critic who was resolved to undermine his reputation. One is forced to remember, indeed, that Mr Grant Allen once made a statement to the effect that Darwin, however great as a naturalist, was of

<sup>1</sup> Article cited, p. 695.



small account as a psychologist.<sup>1</sup> I am not claiming that Buckle's achievement is as comprehensive or as decisive as Darwin's: what I do urge is that he is entitled to the same liberality of criticism, and the same sympathetic hearing. Linnæus and Cuvier lived before Spencer and Darwin: are their generalisations of no value because they were not stated in terms of the development theory? Sir Henry Maine's generalisations again have been weightily impeached by Messrs M'Lennan and Mr Spencer; conclusions of Mr Spencer have been as forcibly and with more asperity attacked by Dr Tylor; Dr Tylor in turn is assuredly not invulnerable; but does any instructed man proceed to treat the failures and miscalculations of these writers as proofs of their substantial incompetence?

Buckle's first volume, as Mr Stephen notes, was published just two years before the "Origin of Species," and, as is well known, made a great sensation. Who can now pretend to prove that Buckle had no share in the movement of thought which Mr Stephen and Mr Allen trace solely to Darwin? Considering that the "Origin" was spoken of by appreciative readers on its appearance, not as stating a new theory, but as a valuable and important contribution to "the development theory";<sup>2</sup> and considering further that Mr Spencer had some hand in constructing an evolution theory before Darwin wrote, the language used by Mr Stephen, and still more that used by Mr Allen, as to the miraculous influence of Darwin's book, is seen to be fully as unscientific as any extravagance of Buckle's. To talk as Mr Allen does of Darwin having at one *coup* toppled over Hegel, Comte, and Buckle, and discredited Mill (whom Mr Allen, by the way, hails as a *magnum et vener-*

<sup>1</sup> "Great as he is, Mr Darwin is no psychologist. His theory fails him when he touches mind."—Article on "The Genesis of Genius," *Atlantic Monthly*, March 1881, p. 376. Compare this with the dicta of Mr Clodd, who thinks it was Darwin that taught us to appreciate the non-external factors in human progress.

<sup>2</sup> See George Eliot's note in her diary, *Life*, ii. 144. She found the *Origin*, it may be remembered, "not impressive, from want of luminous and orderly presentation" (p. 143).

*abile nomen*, in contrast with these other ephemeral personages), is to present a conception of historic and intellectual progress which some of us would be disposed to call foolish if it did not come from such a clever man.

§ 2. As to Comte, Mr Stephen takes a different tone, bringing forward that philosopher in order to depreciate Buckle. He says [*italics mine*]:—

"I cannot affect to doubt that Comte, *however crude and hasty may be some of his opinions*, was as superior to Buckle in reasoning power as Buckle was superior to Comte in power of literary expression. Comte, in particular, has a far clearer view of history as a process of organic development. If we reject *his views*, we cannot say that they are on the face of them trifling or irrelevant, which is more than can be said for *many of Buckle's unsystematic and haphazard generalisations*." <sup>1</sup>

I do not know whether Mr Stephen means that Comte can be crude and hasty without ever being trivial or irrelevant; or whether he is simply making one of those grossly unjust comparisons between the alleged better work of one man and the alleged worse work of another, which in the works of Mr Arnold and elsewhere have done so much discredit to English critical science in other directions. It is difficult to follow any distinction of merit between reasoning that is "random and haphazard" and reasoning that is "crude and hasty." But as Mr Stephen's essay is rather fertile in confusions, and as it is unpleasing to assume that he would deliberately contrast what he thought soundest in Comte with what he thought unsoundest in Buckle, and leave Comte's unsoundness out of the comparison, one prefers the former explanation. On that head I can but say that the implication as to Comte's freedom from triviality or irrelevance will not bear a moment's examination. I turn to a recent essay by Professor Sigdwick—surely not a headlong judge or an over-emphatic writer—and I find him noting, as to Comte, "how completely the delusive belief that he had constructed a science of sociology could transform a philo-

<sup>1</sup> Article cited, p. 680.

sopher of remarkable power and insight into the likeness of a crazy charlatan."<sup>1</sup> Will Mr Stephen, on a re-perusal—or a perusal—of Comte, deny that these words are warrantable? If he is not satisfied with Mr Sidgwick's citations of insane sociological prediction, there might be cited for him from Comte a number of quasi-philosophic prescriptions as to method which, I think, even Mr Stephen would not deny to be samples of sheer midsummer madness.<sup>2</sup> His way of sneering at Buckle's share in the "curious tone of popular complacency which was prevalent some thirty years ago,"<sup>3</sup> suggests that he has made no very extensive study of Comte, whose sanguineness over modern progress exceeds anything in contemporary literature. At least I cannot think Mr Stephen would knowingly mete out such very different measure to two writers on whom he professes to sit in judgment. I am not here sustaining any thesis as to Buckle's general equality with or superiority to Comte; such an inquiry being to my mind a rather idle form of argumentation. I simply submit that the criticism above quoted from Mr Stephen proves him to be an untrustworthy authority. He is, to my mind, just as far wrong in what he says as to the literary gifts of the two writers as in regard to their "reasoning powers," as he puts it, or their reasonableness, as he would partly seem to mean. I confess I am more surprised at his view on the first head than on the second, having thought him a safer critical guide (though a loose practitioner) on style than on wider questions. While apparently valuing Buckle much more highly than does Mr Stephen, I am unable to echo his praise of the historian's

<sup>1</sup> *Scope and Method of Political Economy* (1885), p. 55.

<sup>2</sup> For instance, in addition to the items mentioned by Professor Sidgwick, Comte's elaborate application of a theory of numbers to the art of literary composition. (*Synthèse Subjective; Logique Positive*, Conclusion, pp. 755-760.) Compare the rules as to length of prayers, and building the Temples of Humanity throughout the world looking to Paris (*Catechism*, Conv. 4). In the gentle words of M. Littré, "lui aussi [Comte] a quelquefois manqué contre cette philosophie qu'il a créé" (*Comte et Stuart Mill*, p. 46).

<sup>3</sup> Article cited, p. 673.

"literary excellence." I cannot see that Comte is inferior to Buckle in the power of expressing his thought, such as it was, though he was much inferior to him in clearness of conception. Buckle's style—that is, his whole fashion of expression—seems to me decidedly one of his weak points, and to carry marks of his lack at once of variety of literary practice and of a sense of modern artistic developments. He seems to have formed it with an eye especially to the classics of past centuries,<sup>1</sup> a distinct mistake on the part of any writer of his day, and a distinct inconsistency on the part of Buckle, who had pointed out the dangers of classicism. His diction is frequently commonplace, and not seldom turgid; often inexact; built on an old conventional type; energetic and lucid, certainly, but unoriginal, unsubtle, sometimes even juvenile.<sup>2</sup> It may do very well for unexacting readers; but I cannot doubt that some of the literary discredit into which Buckle has fallen is due to the later recognition of the element of rhetoric which pervades his book, and which is perhaps the most unphilosophic thing in it. His mere vivacity and sonority, which Mr Stephen would seem disposed to reckon as saving graces, if they secured him readers, lost him critical votes. The weakness, I think, was not vital, but it was very

<sup>1</sup> See the *Life*, i. 40.

<sup>2</sup> Professor Flint, in his hostile article in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, softens once to say that Buckle's style "has been pronounced, by an eminently competent judge, 'equal to the subject, precise enough for the demands of science, full, flowing, and flexible enough for every purpose of eloquence. Lucid where the business of the writer is to state, explain, or illustrate, it ascends, when anger at the oppressor or sympathy with the oppressed call (*sic*) upon it, to tones worthy of Edmund Burke himself denouncing the corruptions of England or the wrongs of India.'" The testimony is comically self-destructive. The "eminently competent judge" (the anonymous editor of the Leipzig edition of Buckle's *Essays*) is himself a lax performer in the order of style which used, I believe, in university slang, to be called "tootle." M. de Remusat, it may be added, thought Buckle's style superior to Comte's; but Buckle has faults such as the critic attributes to his countryman. Darwin, while doubting the value of Buckle's doctrines, pronounced him "to my taste the very best writer of the English language that ever lived, let the other (*sic*) be who he may" (*Life*, ii. 315). But literary judgment, of course, was not one of Darwin's gifts. He was simply charmed with Buckle's readableness.

palpable; and with readers at all inclined to be unsympathetic it must have done him much harm. A style like that of Dr Stubbs, guarded and pregnant, if unalluring and at times even stiff, would have presented such doctrines as Buckle's with more permanent advantage, though it might have limited the circulation of his book.

§ 3. It consists with an unfavourable opinion of Buckle's literary manner to admit that he is frequently, as Mr Stephen says, loose in his phraseology, just as Bacon and Descartes and Darwin were loose. And yet if Mr Stephen had had any such prejudice in Buckle's favour as he has had in favour of, say, Burke, I imagine he would have found much valuable thinking where he has somehow seen literary brilliance, but nothing more. He does indeed go so far, just after the beginning of his essay, as to make the curious concession that Buckle's "philosophical enthusiasm, the eagerness with which he *assimilated immense stores of multifarious knowledge*, the energy with which he *arranged it in luminous order and applied it to the illustration of great principles*, are proofs of rare endowments both of the moral and intellectual order."<sup>1</sup> It is difficult to reconcile such a judgment with Mr Stephen's final estimate. Is not the luminous literary arrangement of a vast amount of assimilated knowledge, and the energetic application of it to the "illustration of great principles," an important and lasting service to human thought? Surely Mr Stephen had not thought out his verdict when he said further that "since Gibbon, no English man of letters has devoted himself so systematically and vigorously to erect a literary monument worthy of the highest abilities." If a "brilliant amateur" was and did all this, who, I ask again, are the experts? Mr Stephen (if my memory is not at fault) once, by way of critical illustration, told us a story of how the Duke of Wellington put on record that "in Spain the rats got into the bottles." It was suggested that either the bottles must have been very large or the rats very small. "No," said his Grace, "the bottles were very small and the rats very

<sup>1</sup> Article cited, p. 673.

large." The fable came home to roost when the critic wrote on "An Attempted Philosophy of History." No explanation that I can think of will acquit him of inserting in an important literary judgment two opinions that are mutually exclusive, and doing nothing to reduce his written deliverances to consistency.

§ 4. The infirmity of judgment is seen again and again. Even after specifically deriding one of Buckle's propositions, Mr Stephen hesitates so far as to virtually unsay his words. "Nobody, I fancy," he writes, "ever attached much importance to Buckle's daring generalities about the effects of a rice diet upon the liberties of mankind."<sup>1</sup> And then in a dozen lines more we have this, on the same point: "Buckle was perhaps aiming at a sound principle, which it might be worth while at another time to disengage from his loose phraseology." "Perhaps aiming at a sound principle" is good. Mr Stephen, in point of fact, has done absolutely nothing to overturn the generalisation in question, which is not in the least, as he strangely represents, an arbitrary application of the Ricardian law of rent to the society of ancient India, but constitutes an elevation of Ricardo's other law of the subsistence of labour into a broad historic principle. It is one of those generalisations by which Buckle really illuminates history. Mr Stephen's criticism on this head is peculiarly weak, involving as it does the assumption that the theory of cheap food being a cause of Irish and Indian misery is both inconsistent with Free Trade principles and ill-established in itself. Unsettled as economics is, I doubt whether Buckle has one economist against him in the matter.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Article cited, p. 684.

<sup>2</sup> Mr Cliffe Leslie has indeed controverted Ricardo on this subject, saying of that economist's theory of natural (=normal) values and wages:—"These nebulous assumptions are not only both false, but also contradictory; for if the cost of the labourer's subsistence determined the rate of wages, it could not vary in different occupations with the nature of the work" (*Essays in Political and Moral Philosophy*, 2nd ed., pp. 192-3). But Mr Leslie was much more anxious at all times to find flaws in Ricardo than to find what truth underlay his propositions. The tendency of wages to approach subsistence

§ 5. Mr Stephen has a momentary appearance of cogency when he seeks to show, as against Buckle, that "the relation between climate and civilisation is not constant," by pointing out that "in Europe long ages of barbarism have been succeeded by the highest known development of civilisation, whilst in Asia civilisation reached a certain point much earlier, and then remained stationary";<sup>1</sup> but here he is at bottom even more fallacious than in the last case. He is absurd. To give such a statement as a proof that the relation between climate and civilisation is not constant is like saying that the law of gravitation ceases to operate when you climb a ladder. Mr Stephen shows an obscure perception of this when he goes on to say, wavering as usual in his attack, that "of course formulæ about climate" "have some value. Climate must be a condition of progress, for it is a condition of life." And Mr Clodd, who adopts Mr Stephen's "formula" that the relation is "not constant," may be presumed to grant as much. But the assertion of both propositions leaves us asking whether Mr Stephen and Mr Clodd fancy that life is sometimes unconditioned. Once more, if they merely mean that the relation varies with the culture stage, they are not controverting Buckle, who expressly teaches so. Their proposition, to have any relevance, must mean that at times there is no relation between climate and civilisation, which is nonsense. The explanation would seem to be that Mr Stephen, reading Buckle at random, is "aiming," as he would say, at a general statement of the relation between climate and civilisation which he supposes Buckle to have missed, when in reality it is fully implied in Buckle's "formulas," which he so unconscientiously disparages. Buckle has shown us how Asia furnished the

level is a general one, which is confessedly modified by other economic laws. It is, of course, most apparent in the case of unskilled labour; and the spread of neo-Malthusian convictions is the measure of the perception that only an intelligent raising of the standard of comfort can avert the worst results. But where there is no thought of parental prudence, as in India and Ireland, the tendency of wages to fall to subsistence level comes into very obvious play.

<sup>1</sup> Article cited, p. 683

material conditions for a comparatively rapid rise of civilisation at a stage of human growth in which the climate of Europe was *relatively* unpropitious; how Egypt similarly was specially fitted to sustain a primary civilisation; how climatic conditions likewise determined the early civilisation of Mexico and Peru; how civilisation failed to arise in parts of America where a "race elsewhere civilised," as Mr Stephen rightly but unthinkingly puts it, has since flourished; how the Arabs, uncivilised in their original home, became rapidly civilised in more propitious regions, under the stimulus of recovered Greek culture; and how the European civilisations, rising in regions not fitted to produce a primary civilisation, have far outgone those primary civilisations on which they drew. All this constitutes a general doctrine which recognises all the facts of the case, including those which so confused Mr Stephen as to make him allege that a fundamental relation is "not constant." What he had in view is the fact that the higher or secondary civilisations, as it were, overcome obstacles of climate which would preclude a primary civilisation. Now, this has always been recognised by the school of writers who, following on Montesquieu, have been usually accused, like him, of staking all on climate.<sup>1</sup> Montesquieu himself<sup>2</sup> noted that "nature and climate rule almost solely among savages," while in higher stages of culture, manners, laws, ethics, and maxims of government come into play. The discrimination is loose and unphilosophical, but at least it makes the point that climate is diversely influential in different societies. Ferguson, carrying the study further, noted<sup>3</sup> that it was in the torrid zone that arts and industries were found most developed in the New World on its discovery, but that that zone "has nowhere matured the more important projects of political wisdom." This view was yet further developed

<sup>1</sup> See below, ch. viii., for an account of Professor Flint's misrepresentations of Charles Comte.

<sup>2</sup> *De L'Esprit des Lois*, xix. 4.

<sup>3</sup> *Essay on the History of Civil Society* (1767), p. 169.



by Robertson, who, after dwelling forcibly on the importance of climate in civilisation, wrote that "This powerful operation of climate is felt most sensibly by rude nations, and produces greater effects than in societies more improved. . . . Civilised men . . . can in a great measure guard against the inconveniences of any climate."<sup>1</sup> Finally, Dunbar of Aberdeen, in the same generation, noting the facts as to Peru and Mexico, put the clinching proposition that their civilisation, once well started, might have been more highly developed in other parts of the country.<sup>2</sup> Buckle might profitably have framed his thesis by way of development of these, which are clear and just, where Mr Stephen is to-day confused and contradictory; but at least he fully includes their purport in his, as he does substantially with the thesis of Herder, who was stimulated alike by the Scotch and the French sociologists.<sup>3</sup> Herder, while admitting and dwelling on the differentiating force of climate, and laying down the broad evolutionary principle that "our planet is a great laboratory for the organisation of very various creatures,"<sup>4</sup> insisted on the other hand that "as climate is a plexus of forces and influences, to which plants and animals contribute, and of which all living things serve to constitute a variable whole, so man is set therein as lord of the earth, that he may alter it through art."<sup>5</sup> "Climate does not compel: it inclines." And he concludes that, pending an exact science of climatic effects, our business is to note the living forces for which each climate is adapted, and which by their very existence modify it in a multitude of ways. This way of putting the case, in so far as it lays special stress on the human side of the equation of organism and environment, and in its touches of teleology, indicates the tendency of the more religious or mystic cast of thinker to

<sup>1</sup> *History of America* (1777), Book iv. *Works*, ed. 1821, viii. 105.

<sup>2</sup> *Essays on the History of Mankind* (1780), pp. 225, 233.

<sup>3</sup> His theory of the origin of speech proceeded on the work of Lord Monboddo, whose volumes on the subject he translated.

<sup>4</sup> *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit*, B. ii. 1.

<sup>5</sup> *Id.*, B. vii. 3.

emphasise the statement on the side of "mind" so-called as against matter so-called. But Herder does really see the central and harmonising truth, which is that, just because man is part of Nature, he has as such his share in the cosmic energy, and manifests it in his capacity of a developing animal, conditioned but not defined by his physical circumstances. "The genetic force," as Herder puts it, "is the mother of all organisms on the earth, and climate only modifies inimically or favourably."<sup>1</sup> There is thus a "strife between genesis and climate." If the theistic school can accept this account, the rationalist well may; and Buckle actually did. It is amply expressed in his doctrine that in the European civilisations, man, being much less mastered by Nature, learns best to master her; so that the factor of intellect is the ruling one in European history.

This is finally put with the utmost definiteness by Dr Draper, who, with Buckle, is accused of making physical nature the one key to all progress. Draper expressly lays it down that, though unpropitious surroundings retard indefinitely the beginnings of culture, they may later stimulate it.

"Under such circumstances, however, if once the preliminary conditions and momentum of civilisation be imparted to [man], the very things which have hitherto tended to depress him *produce an opposite effect*. Instead of remaining in sameness and apathy, the vicissitudes to which he is now exposed *urge him onward*; and thus it is that, though the civilisation of Europe depended for its commencement on the sameness and stability of an African climate [that of Egypt], the conquests of Nature which mark its more advanced stage have been made in the trying life of the temperate zone."<sup>2</sup>

We have here the whole truth on the subject on which Mr Stephen darkens counsel; unless indeed it be that the statement does not sufficiently keep in view the continual and *direct* action of climate. Buckle, so far from over-

<sup>1</sup> B. vii. 4, 5.

<sup>2</sup> *Intellectual Development of Europe*, ed. 1875, i. 85. It is to be noted that Darwin adopted the principle from Buckle and Draper. He puts it that "natural selection" operates only in a slight degree among civilised peoples as regards moral progress. *Descent of Man*, 2nd ed., i. 112.

stating that, really made too little of it, in reaction against some of the fantasies and fallacies of Montesquieu. While the closet philosophers have been deciding with Mr Stephen that the influence of climate on types is "not constant," the actual observers of man recognise how, at the present stage of his culture, it everywhere visibly affects him physiologically and psychologically. Applying exacter criteria than those of antiquity, they note not only the gradations of temperament according to latitude, but the modifications set up in migrating races. The Scotch sociologists of last century had already gone too far in suggesting that the civilised man could adapt himself to any climate. We now know that, racially speaking, he cannot. We know that he cannot breed healthily in low-lying India: that he must send his children home early if they are to be strong. It is further noted that the born Australian, with his different climate, is perforce more temperate than his British progenitors; that climate already makes shades of difference of type between New England and California; that the Southern States of the American Union continue to exhibit less energy than the Northern; that the American type is distinctly more nervous and sensitive than the English or the German. All these data<sup>1</sup> may further serve to show the futility of Mr Stephen's dictum that the relation of climate to civilisation is "not constant." The truth he was reaching towards in his amateur way is simply that the relation is *variable*, because it is a relation of variables. Like so many of Buckle's critics, he had evidently begun writing his criticism and passing his blame before he had thought out the question. An abortive paragraph of his essay<sup>2</sup> begins with the concession that "it is indeed conceivable" that Buckle's broad formula as to nature and

<sup>1</sup> Compare the various comments of Taine, *Notes sur l'Angleterre*, and Emerson, *English Traits*, on English phenomena; the views of the late C. H. Pearson, *National Character*, on the rivalry of races in the New World and Asia; and Schmidt, *Doctrine of Descent and Darwinism*, Eng. tr., p. 176.

<sup>2</sup> As cited, p. 684.

man "might state the limit imposed upon the growth of an indigenous civilisation"; which is exactly what Buckle says.<sup>1</sup> The remark indicates a tardy perception of Buckle's drift without enough of the judicial spirit to recast the criticism accordingly.

§ 6. But, indeed, "abortive" is a term inadequate to the description of a paragraph in which Mr Stephen proceeds from what is either bad quibbling or bad misunderstanding to a worse misrepresentation of the work he is disparaging. He will not or can not see the simple meaning of Buckle's rough generalisation that in Europe "man is more powerful than nature," while in parts of Asia "nature is more powerful than man."<sup>2</sup> It was simply this, that in Europe generally man is more dependent on his own efforts for subsistence than in those more fruitful territories to which Buckle alludes. The phrase quoted is only one of many—one of the last of them, as it happens—in which the proposition is made perfectly clear. An earlier expression is that "in the civilisations out of Europe the powers of nature have been greater than in those in Europe."<sup>3</sup> But Mr Stephen must needs argue that "life is easy in India (and man, one would suppose, stronger than nature)"—as if it were not plain that the "easiness" Buckle had in view was the fecundity of the soil, and the consequent cheapness of grain food. To most people these are hardly proofs of man's being stronger than nature.

§ 7. In addition, Mr Stephen represents Buckle as "assuming in the first place the questionable proposition that the principles of the Ricardian political economy may be applied offhand to ancient India, *and that the theory of the division of wealth into rent, profit, and wages, is part of the eternal order of things*"; when in point of fact, Buckle expressly sets forth that "after the creation and accumulation of wealth have once fairly begun," wealth will be divided among two classes; that in a later stage it will be divided among three, in the forms of "Interest, Profits, and Wages"; and that "*in a still more advanced stage, there is a fourth*

<sup>1</sup> I. 44, 95, &c.

<sup>2</sup> I. 242.

<sup>3</sup> I. 152; cf. pp. 120, 140.

division of wealth, and part of the produce of labour is absorbed by rent"; the later development being only alluded to in a foot-note and not in the text at all!<sup>1</sup> So far from being a blind Ricardian, Buckle had evidently accepted the criticism of Jones, only pointing out in his foot-note that "several of the opponents of Ricardo have placed the beginning of rent too early by overlooking the fact that apparent rent is very often profits disguised." He expressly states that "in India . . . the lowest rate [of rent] recognised by the law and usage of the country is one-half the produce"; which amounts to saying that Ricardo's law is beside the case.<sup>2</sup> And as if this oversight and injustice were not enough, Mr Stephen goes on to assert that Buckle "sees nothing but 'nature'—that is, climate, soil, and so forth—on one side, and the unit called 'man' on the other. Man, as with Ricardo and Bentham, is an unvarying entity of constant properties." Much might be said on the perversity of the judgment which classes the economic method of Ricardo, in which the abstraction of man furthers science,<sup>3</sup> with the juristic method of Bentham, in which the abstraction of man speedily hinders science; but it is enough here to remark that Mr Stephen is saying of Buckle what his own later remarks show him to know to be inaccurate. I have already indicated the facts in dealing with Mr Clodd, who, I fancy, took his opinion, as well as his phrases, from Mr Stephen. But Mr Stephen's own essay shows that he had read Buckle sufficiently to be aware that the "Introduction" recognised forces of progress apart from "climate, soil, and so forth."

§ 8. Nor is even this all. In his next paragraph Mr Stephen goes on to say:—"Now progress, says Buckle, may be moral or intellectual, and we have to inquire which

<sup>1</sup> Buckle, i. 52-3.

<sup>2</sup> It may be that Mr Stephen, whom one sees to be a careless reader, made a random inference from a passage (i. 72) about a "state of things similar to that which now exists," where there is no reference to the law of rent whatever.

<sup>3</sup> Mr Stephen, I suppose, was echoing Mr Cliffe Leslie and Mr Ingram without independent reflection, as Mr Clodd echoed Mr Stephen.

is the more important of the two elements. . . . Now, he adds, *and in full conformity with his whole theory*, we have *no ground* for assuming 'any permanent improvement in the moral or intellectual faculties of man.' " The reader who has not specially referred to Buckle will hardly believe that part of the passage which Mr Stephen here professes to sum up reads as follows :—

"It may be that, owing to some physical causes still unknown, the average capacity of the brain is, if we compare long periods of time, becoming gradually greater ; and that therefore the mind, which acts through the brain, is, even independently of education, increasing in aptitude and in the general competence of its views. Such, however, is still our ignorance of physical laws, and so completely are we in the dark as to the *circumstances which regulate the hereditary transmission* of character, temperament, and other personal peculiarities, that we must consider this alleged progress as a very doubtful point ; and, in the present state of our knowledge, we *cannot safely assume* that there has been any permanent improvement in the moral or intellectual faculties of man, nor have we *any decisive ground* for saying that those faculties are likely to be greater in an infant born in the most civilised part of Europe, than in one born in the wildest region of a barbarous country." <sup>1</sup>

No one could have surmised the drift of this passage from Mr Stephen's account of it. Buckle, it will be seen, instead of pronouncing definitively against brain development on the general grounds of his philosophy, keeps his mind scrupulously and expectantly open on the subject, and is careful to indicate the possibility, only demanding more proof. The doctrine, it will be remembered, was first brought scientifically before the world by the phrenologists, who, since Buckle's time, have been treated by our amateur authorities on science as mountebanks. It was from the phrenologists that Comte adopted it, admitting, however, as Buckle notes, that the verification was not complete ; and what Buckle did was to stipulate <sup>2</sup> that before it could

<sup>1</sup> I. 176-177.

<sup>2</sup> See his footnotes. Mr Huth says (*Life and Writings of Buckle*, i. 65, note) that Buckle "finally discarded" phrenology, "for it is not mentioned in his *History*." This is an oversight : see footnote 11, p. 176, where there is no "discarding."

be taken as proved, the researches begun by Blumenbach should be more comprehensively carried out. I venture to doubt whether Mr Stephen came to his own opinion on the subject after as much examination of the evidence. His triumphs over his predecessors never appear to be checked by any self-questioning as to how he or his contemporaries might have figured in the same circumstances. On the contrary, he lays it down that Buckle, as a "follower of Mill," "shared Mill's *incapacity* to appreciate adequately the importance of any theory of evolution;"<sup>1</sup> this though Buckle here has shown his preparedness for an evolution theory, and though Mill, as Mr Stephen actually mentions later, "regarded the creation of a philosophy of history as the vast service by which the Coleridgeans compensated the deficiencies of their own party."<sup>2</sup> By such a critical method, what is to be made of Darwin's "incapacity" to make the progress which has been made by other men in the study of natural law since his main work was done? or of Professor Huxley's "incapacity" to see the truth of evolution before the publication of Darwin's book? Buckle, as we saw, accepted that book as soon as it appeared, which is more than many did who later became strong evolutionists. But his specific gravity withheld him from the levity of premature optimism to which the new doctrine inspired so many, including, it would appear, Mr Stephen. That critic is very assured about the superiority of Comte to Buckle in respect of a cock-a-hoop confidence in rapid social progress; though he is just as convinced of the folly of Buckle and others in looking for the cessation of European war after the first International Exhibition. Mr Stephen's critical method would seem to be largely one of progress by alternate sneers; and his wheeling guns are thus apt to damage his own positions. But there is now turned upon them the more weighty artillery of the pessimists, on the one hand, and of the Weismannites on the other; and even those of us who deny Weismann to be a true interpreter of human life,

<sup>1</sup> Article cited, p. 672.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 677.

cannot affect to believe that he is to be disposed of by the simple methods of Mr Stephen. Buckle's more strategic attitude turns out to have its advantages.

§ 9. If Buckle had professed to settle everything, as Mr Stephen often hints he did, there would have been some excuse for this fashion of judging him by what he did not do. But, on the contrary, he made the plainest avowal that he only hoped partially to analyse the relations between "the aspect of nature and the mind of man."

"I need hardly say that I make no pretensions to anything approaching an exhaustive analysis, nor can I hope to do more than generalise a few of the laws of that complicated but as yet unexplored process by which the external world has affected the human mind."<sup>1</sup>

Mr Stephen, however, has chosen to call Buckle's work "an attempted philosophy of history," and to represent him<sup>2</sup> as seeing in himself "the inspired prophet of a new era"; though again the critic grudgingly admits<sup>3</sup>—for he has an intermittent sense of the requirements of justice—that the "prophet" took a very different view of the case. Such alternate description of the chess-board as all white and all black, I submit, is not criticism.

What Buckle really did, as I take it, was to attain a series of lucid generalisations of the conditions, or proximate laws, of historic change in a number of countries, thus making intelligible a quantity of history which previous writers had been for the most part only able to exhibit as a mere medley of fantastic incident. To say that as to the principle of climate he merely adopted formulæ which have been commonplaces since Montesquieu, is sheer perversity. Where Montesquieu threw out or reiterated a series of guesses, Buckle worked out an exposition.<sup>4</sup> He connected

<sup>1</sup> I. 119. Compare the remarks at ii. 375, 443, as to the preparatory and incomplete character of what had been written.

<sup>2</sup> Article cited, p. 673.

<sup>3</sup> P. 676.

<sup>4</sup> It is noteworthy that Buckle (here following Charles Comte) finds Montesquieu's theory of climatic influence on individuals "completely futile as regards results," because "a hundred years after he wrote, we, with all our increased knowledge, can affirm nothing positively respecting the direct action of climate, food, and soil in modifying individual character, though it has, I trust, appeared



climatic phænomena with conditions of food production, these with economic law, and the whole with religious development, in a way that really helps us to comprehend history. All scientific advance is nothing but the reduction of groups of phenomena to generalisations, and these again to wider generalisations; and Buckle did this none the less because he left fundamental generalisations still to be made. What if he gets here and there entangled in his metaphysic (it is an entanglement easily put right for himself by the reader) as to the cause and the effect of the protective spirit in France: was it not much to have exhibited the scope and the outcome of the protective spirit as he did, and to have traced that and other lines of sequence in French history where former writers had given us mere annals, or, as in Carlyle's case, obscurantist sermons? Does not his method reduce the phenomena of Spanish history to order; and is not that to attain a valuable and positive result? The late Mr Cliffe Leslie, who was perhaps something of an expert, is found speaking, as we have seen, of Buckle's "excellent chapters on the Intellectual History of France," though opposed to some of his opinions. And where Mr Stephen most precisely challenges Buckle's treatment of concrete history, I for my part am most satisfied of the futility of the attack.

§ 10. "The remarks upon Scotch history," Mr Stephen says, "represent the weakest side of Buckle"; and this is how he clinches his demonstration:—

"I am no unqualified lover of the Sabbath, but I do not like to see an anti-Sabbatarian pamphlet passing itself off for a philosophy of history; and I cannot help feeling that more philosophy is held in solution in a few pages of *Old Mortality* or the *Heart of Midlothian* than in a hundred such volumes as Buckle's. Whence came the Scotch peasantry typified by Davie Deans or Dandie Dinmont, and known to us all through the lyrics of Burns? And what has be-

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in the second chapter of this Introduction that something can be ascertained respecting their indirect action—that is, their action on individual minds through the medium of social and economical organisation" (ii. 319, *κ.*). This, however, is only an incidental detraction on Buckle's part; he gives Montesquieu the highest credit for genius and accomplishment.

come of the great general causes and the profound intellectual laws (the moral certainly have disappeared completely enough !) in this pettifogging theory of a nation's life ?"<sup>1</sup>

Well, what *has* become of the great general causes and the profound intellectual laws? If Mr Stephen knows causes and laws which Buckle failed to find, why does he not state them for us? What light has *he* to throw on the matter? Whence *did* come Davie Deans, and Dandie Dinmont, and that peasantry which Mr Stephen fancies he knows through the lyrics of Burns? I find the most disrespectful terms that Mr Stephen has used of Buckle inadequate to the characterisation of his own weakness in the above passage. When a critic of an alleged "attempted philosophy of history" is reduced to vapouring about the philosophy that is "held in solution"—exquisite figure!—in the pages of a few of Scott's novels, his hold on the respect of his instructed readers becomes slight. An emptier piece of verbiage it would be difficult to frame. Imagine the philosophically saturated condition of the reader of Scott, as compared with the reader of Buckle, in regard to the causes of the spread of Puritanism in Scotland. After giving some amount of attention to Scottish history in general—more, perhaps, than Mr Stephen has given it—I maintain, as against his rhapsodies, that if Buckle has not told the whole truth about the forces traceable in that history, he has at least never gone very far wrong; that he has done more to classify its phenomena than any other writer; that he gave in the main a sound statement of the case when he showed that the self-interested action of the nobles, from first to last, brought about the peculiarly close relation between the clergy and the people; that if he does not fully trace for us the origin of species in regard to Davie Deans, he leaves us much nearer such a knowledge than we are in regard to types of character in general; and that Scott's treatment of the Reformation period, in comparison with Buckle's, is so far from being philosophical that it is not even fairly accurate in local colour. The

<sup>1</sup> Article cited, p. 692.

reader of "Old Mortality" will indeed get light from Cuddie and Mause Headrigg, and even from Balfour; but the rest is mostly leather and prunella. A study of Dr McCrie's criticism of the "Tales of my Landlord"<sup>1</sup> would perhaps modify Mr Stephen's enthusiasm for Scott as an exponent of Puritanism, though one sees that he is latterly much more concerned to find good behind superstition than under any phase of "materialism." I will add that the antipathy to Calvinism on Buckle's part, which Mr Stephen strangely seems to regard<sup>2</sup> as a proof that he never understood the system, does not at all make him unsympathetic to the clerical side of the Scotch Reformation movement. On the contrary he becomes quite declamatory—mistakenly so, as I think—in its praise, reserving his invective for the clerical literature of the next generation and the next century. In short, Mr Stephen's criticism on this head chiefly serves to show his now well-known anxiety to avoid the appearance of materialism,<sup>3</sup> and his preference for generalisations with a poetic sound, however vacuous, over those which seem to reduce humanity to an inseparable dependence on matter, or even to predicate cause and effect in regard to human volition.

§ 11. Let it be granted twice over that Buckle is at times faulty in his metaphysic and his terminology. In any case it was hardly his business to attempt what he did in the former direction; though it was part of his method to study everything bearing even distantly on his subject; and it may be questioned whether many of the gentlemen who

<sup>1</sup> In which he showed, among other things, that Scott followed English tradition in giving Biblical names to Scotch Puritans, when in reality such names were not more common in Scotland in the Puritan period than now.

<sup>2</sup> "The only permanent symptom of early changes [in Buckle's opinions] was a strong dislike to Calvinism, which proves that he had *never really entered into the spirit of the doctrine*." Perhaps Mr Stephen means that he had never been an earnest Calvinist, which would be an equally idle assertion.

<sup>3</sup> See his lecture on "What is Materialism?" reproduced in his *Agnostic's Apology*. I may say here that the insinuation as to Buckle having "succeeded in putting aside the most vital problems of the time," comes with an ill grace from the author of the lecture in question. Buckle's theism was perfectly sincere, however ill-considered.

have lately criticised him have anything like his acquaintance with metaphysical literature. Let it be granted, too, that he has not rightly wrought out the distinction between deduction and induction, which indeed is not properly cleared up at this moment; and that he somewhat strains matters at times on this head in his analysis of the Scotch intellect. I think he specially failed to make good his distinction between deductive reasoning and inductive reasoning with the aid of a hypothesis.<sup>1</sup> But it is one thing to recognise in Buckle flaws of reasoning such as professed metaphysicians, and Mr Stephen, are frequently guilty of, and another to acquiesce in Mr Stephen's reckless charges against him of sweeping self-confutation. The worst of the confusion, as usual, is Mr Stephen's own. "Buckle argues," he tells us, "both that Smith's book was ineffectual because it was deductive, and therefore quasi-theological, and that it was the most important book ever written because it led to the foundation of political science, and so to the exclusion of theology;"<sup>2</sup> and again we are told that "to characterise the whole of the movement in which Hume and Smith are the great leaders by this external peculiarity, and to regard it as favourable to theology because it made some use of deductive reasoning, shows a willingness to sacrifice facts to theory quite unworthy of an inductive, or, indeed, of a deductive reasoner." Now, Buckle simply did not do the things he is here said to have done. Briefly, his proposition was this: That ingrained theological habit had given a deductive cast to Scotch thinking in general; that Smith and Hume represent this bias; and that they turned a method hitherto identified

<sup>1</sup> "The deductive thinker," he writes (iii. 291), "invariably assumes certain premises, which are quite different from the hypothesis essential to the best induction," but he does not work out the distinction; and his account of the deductive method seems to clash with his references to it elsewhere and his praise of Smith. Later, too, he wavers in his certainty of distinction. "It is often said, and probably with truth, that all deduction is preceded by induction" (iii. 463). It should be remembered that these closing chapters were written when he was much shaken by his mother's death and by over-work.

<sup>2</sup> Article cited, p. 694.

with theology to different ends ; but that Smith's great book influenced English statesmanship and Scotch politics mainly because, contending as it did for an extension of freedom, it harmonised with the democratic aspirations of the time, not because of a general appreciation of its fundamental logic ; while Hume, again, entirely failed to influence the general thought of his own country because he was essentially deductive, and deductive reasoning never influences the general multitude, save in theology.

The true answer to Buckle here is obviously that if Smith's book succeeded as it did because the general social tendency was in the free-trade direction, then the book itself was not so signally important. And I agree with Mr Stephen in thinking Buckle was wrong in setting Smith, as he does, far above Hume as a thinker ; a judgment the more untenable because he goes on all the same to pass on Hume praise of the very highest kind, which would by implication raise Smith beyond all praise whatever. This is an extravagance which, had he lived, Buckle would one day have detected ; and I would point out that what he says of Smith's book (twice over) is that it was "probably" the most important book ever published, whereas Mr Stephen omits the "probably." The upshot of the argument would be that Smith was not so emphatically deductive as Buckle had said ; that, on the contrary, he must have been in the terms of the case partly inductive to make the sensation he did. This, I think, is true. But beyond this point Mr Stephen only darkens the issue. It was hardly worth even his while to argue that Smith "might have reasoned till doomsday without obtaining a single economical truth" on the mere theory of self-interest, "for the simple reason that absolute selfishness is perfectly compatible with the absence of all industrial organisation ;" and that he assumed the existing industrial state of society. If Buckle had foreseen he was to be subjected to such very acute analysis, he might have pointed out that the existing industrial society constituted the phenomena to the analysis of which, as he put it, Smith applied the

principle of self-interest, reasoning deductively from that. But was this necessary for the reader who is not a professed critic? And could not even Mr Stephen have remembered that on the previous page he had shown he knew that Buckle did not think there was such a thing as absolute deduction *in vacuo*? It may be well to say here in so many words that Buckle was drawing a general contrast between average English and average Scotch habits of inquiry and argument last century, and that he was asserting not two absolutes but relative differences. And it is still true that Smith resorts much more to deduction and first principles than do the English writers on trade in and up to his time.<sup>1</sup> It is worth while, too, to repeat Buckle's reminder that Smith said he did not believe much in statistics. Nay, to whom but to Mr Stephen do we owe these accounts of Smith's general relation to economic and other science:—

"In both treatises [*Moral Sentiments* and *Wealth of Nations*] we are called upon to trace the workings of a kind of pre-established harmony. . . . Smith's philosophy of life, which is . . . tolerably consistent, is substantially a corollary from the principles which he shared with the French philosophers generally."<sup>2</sup>

"Had Adam Smith announced no absolutely new doctrines, the comprehensiveness and clearness of his speculations would have given

<sup>1</sup> On Smith's deductiveness in general, it is worth while to note the opinion of Dugald Stewart, his biographer: "In accounting for the pleasure we receive from [the imitative] arts, it had early occurred to him as a fundamental principle that a very great part of it arises from the difficulty of the imitation; a principle which was probably suggested to him by that of the *difficulté surmontée*, by which some French critics had attempted to explain the effect of versification and of rhyme. (See the Preface to Voltaire's *Cœdipe*, edit. of 1729.) This principle Mr Smith pushed to the greatest possible length, and referred to it, with singular ingenuity, a great variety of phenomena in all the different fine arts . . . I cannot help thinking that it warped his judgment in many of the opinions which he was accustomed to give on the subject of poetry." (*Account of the Life and Writings of Adam Smith*, Bohn's ed. of the *Moral Sentiments*, p. xlv.). Again: "In Mr Smith's Writings, whatever be the nature of his subject, he seldom misses an opportunity of . . . tracing from the principles of human nature, or from the circumstances of society, the origin of the opinions and the institutions which he describes."—*Ibid.*, p. xxxvi.; cf. pp. xxxiv., xxxv., xxxvii.).

<sup>2</sup> *History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century* (1876), ii. 321.

an entirely new rank to his study in the circle of human knowledge. The English economists, before the appearance of the *Wealth of Nations*, claimed only to be adepts in the mysteries of commercial accounts. After it, they began to regard themselves as investigators of a new science, capable of determining the conditions and the limits of human progress."<sup>1</sup>

§ 12. It is really not of the first importance to Buckle's reputation to settle whether he was technically right as to Smith's deductiveness; but at least it is worth while to note how the attacks on his proposition tend to break down. Such, I think, is the case with Mr Cliffe Leslie's, in which Buckle is charged with misconceiving Smith in saying his fundamental economic principle was human selfishness, and his method deductive. Mr Leslie, when it comes to the point, would only say that Smith's method, "though combining throughout a vein of unsound *a priori* speculation, was in large measure inductive,"<sup>2</sup> without saying whether the induction was in the main line of argument or in the digressions. And again Mr Leslie avows that "the clerical system of deductive reasoning certainly runs through and *warps the whole philosophy of Adam Smith*,"<sup>3</sup> and agrees that Buckle was right in saying the "*Wealth of Nations*" and the "*Moral Sentiments*" must be taken together. Nor is it clear that Mr Leslie is safe in saying that Smith corrected his deductive tendency by the habits of historical induction he learned from Montesquieu; though there is much force in the objection that Buckle overlooked the influence of Montesquieu on Smith and the other Scotchmen of last century.<sup>4</sup> *Was*

<sup>1</sup> *History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century* (1876), ii. 284.

<sup>2</sup> *Essays in Political and Moral Philosophy*, p. 150; 2nd ed., p. 23.

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*, p. 158; 2nd ed., p. 31.

<sup>4</sup> "Mr Buckle, who in his excellent chapters on the 'Intellectual History of France' justly traces to England the origin of the spirit of liberty which in the eighteenth century took possession of the French philosophy, nevertheless does injustice at once to France and to Great Britain in overlooking the influence of Montesquieu over Scotch philosophy in Adam Smith's age."—*Id.*, p. 157; 2nd ed., p. 31. Mr Leslie might have added that other French writers than Montesquieu influenced the Scotch writers of the century. Compare the remarks of Carlyle, *Essay on Burns*, ed. 1840, p. 361. "Our

Montesquieu an essentially inductive writer? The question brings us at once to the old problem as to the real nature of deduction and induction, which I do not presume to grapple with here; but it is, I think, safe to say that though Montesquieu brought a wide range of knowledge to bear on historic investigation, he was pre-eminently a man of ideas, given much more to surmise tendencies than to look for facts, and abounding in hypotheses. What are his own words in the preface to the "*Esprit des Lois*"? "I have often begun and often abandoned this work. . . . I followed my object without forming any design; I knew neither rules nor exceptions; I found truth only to lose it; *but when I found my principles, everything I sought came to me.*" Here the deductive admittedly primes the inductive bias. Often, especially in his work on the "Greatness and Decay of the Romans," he was admirably right; often, especially in the "*Esprit des Lois*," his speculative tendency led him wrong;<sup>1</sup> and his largest work as a whole has an eminently speculative character. "A profoundly speculative genius dealing with materials that were intractable," is Buckle's account<sup>2</sup> of the inconclusive aspects of his performance.

culture," says Carlyle of the Scotland of the period, "was exclusively French." Buckle, it should be remembered, paid the highest tribute to Montesquieu on his merits. He notices too, by the way (ii. 302, *n.*) that Robertson was in many respects the pupil of Voltaire.

<sup>1</sup> Thus he reasoned like Rousseau that man existed as an individual before he existed in society (L. i., cc. 2, 3). Ferguson, on the contrary (*Essay on Civil Society*, p. 6), rightly urged that "Mankind are to be taken in groupes, as they have always subsisted." Again, Montesquieu was before Rousseau in saying that "the state of war" began with society (ch. iii). Goldsmith, it may be remembered, wrote that "The Spirit of Laws is an instance how much genius is able to lead learning. . . . He seems more a poet than a philosopher" (*On the Present State of Polite Learning*, ch. vi.).

<sup>2</sup> II. 318. This view, as it happens, is in part supported alike by those who praise and those who depreciate Montesquieu. Compare the hostile judgments of Niebuhr (*Pref. Lecture*, Hare and Thirlwall's translation of *History*, p. xxii.) and Macaulay (*Essay on Macchiavelli*, near end) with the kindlier criticisms of Hume (*Essay Of the Populousness of the Nations; Princ. of Morals*, Sec. iii., Pt. ii., and note T.), of Gibbon (ch. ix., x., xi., *notes*—Bohn's ed. i. 284, 288, 314, 356), and of Prescott (review of Irving's *Conq. of Granada*). Every one of these judgments tells against



§ 13. Altogether, the technical question as to Smith's deductiveness is far from being settled in Buckle's despite ; and the summary closure attempted by Mr Stephen does but recoil on that writer's head. It seems a pity, again, that Mr Stephen should let himself be insensibly led into repudiating his own opinions as he has done in his passing remark, in the essay on Buckle,<sup>1</sup> on "Smith's demolition of that poor 'mercantile theory,' which scarcely ever had an independent existence." This, I know, is the view of some recent economists ; but if it be sound, an alteration will be necessary in the following passages of the "History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century" :—

"The older theorists often held doctrines which were virtually not much wiser than the plan for raising the level of a canal by pumping water from one end and discharging it into the other."<sup>2</sup> "Sometimes, by a hasty induction, it is inferred that what is true of the part must be true of the whole ; and that the process by which a nation is enriched must be identical with that which enriches an individual. Such, for example, was the fallacy of the mercantile system."<sup>3</sup>

"Few reasoners were so perplexed as consciously to adopt the doctrine, generally stated as the pith of the Mercantile Theory, that wealth consists exclusively in gold and silver. The doctrine, indeed, is more or less assumed in the theories about the Balance of Trade, which exercised a great influence upon the earlier commercial theorists."<sup>4</sup>

There is no resolution of the discord raised here by the "indeed," and we are just left to assume that the "Mercantile Theory" itself—whatever might be the fact as to the doctrine which constituted its pith—really did have a rather flourishing existence.

Mr Leslie's, while even those which deny Montesquieu the praise given him by Buckle support the view that he was above all things a theorist. See, further, the conflicting expressions of Mark Pattison (*Essays*, ii. 168, 416). One may take this opportunity of denouncing the criticism of Macaulay, who, by the way (see Trevelyan's *Life*, i. 436) viewed Niebuhr himself in much the same light. He has not a word to say for the masterly *Grandeur et Décadence des Romains*, so justly extolled by Buckle (ii. 314). See the French criticisms on Montesquieu cited by him.

<sup>1</sup> As cited, p. 689.

<sup>2</sup> Work cited, ii. 285.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 287 ; cf. p. 297.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 289.

§ 14. As to Hume, the point is much clearer. It is certainly true that Buckle's sense of proportion gave out when he excepted Hume's "metaphysical essays" in making his characterisation of Hume's method; but if the critic had been less anxious to score hits at any cost, he would have been content with making this reasonable objection.<sup>1</sup> When he goes on to say Buckle was "audacious" in calling the "Natural History of Religion" deductive, and yet further that "even if deductive, it shows that deduction may lead directly to the essential principles of positivism,"<sup>2</sup> he is once more putting himself in error, and refuting only his own misconceptions of Buckle's argument.

First, is the "Natural History" deductive, in the ordinary acceptation of the word? And, secondly, is Mr Stephen right in saying that Hume's metaphysical essays were "intended to cut up by the roots the very possibility of *a priori* speculation." The answer to the first question will involve the answer to the second. The "Natural History," Mr Stephen tells us, "obviously and avowedly starts from the observed fact that monotheism is a recent growth," though Hume "suggests a psychological hypothesis (also based on observation) to account for the fact." I can only express astonishment at such an account of the matter, and submit a few of the facts which it ignores, and with which it is irreconcilable. (1) The third sentence of Hume's introduction to the "Natural History" is a statement that "the whole frame of nature bespeaks an Intelligent Author"; and this proposition is subsumed throughout the entire argument. (2) The very first sentence of the first section of the main treatise runs as follows:—

"It appears to me, that if we consider the improvement of human society, from rude beginnings to a state of greater perfection, poly-

<sup>1</sup> Though Mr Stephen himself is so forgetful as to say that when we set aside Hume's metaphysical, ethical, and theological writings, "nothing is left but the History." Mr Stephen had forgotten the economic and political essays. Will he say these are not deductive?

<sup>2</sup> Article cited, p. 693.

theism or idolatry was, *and necessarily must have been*, the first and most ancient religion of mankind. This opinion *I shall endeavour to confirm by the following arguments*"

—the said arguments including the statement of alleged historic fact with which Mr Stephen says the essay "obviously and avowedly starts." The "psychological hypothesis" is similarly given as an argument in support of the thesis. I am not saying that Hume's argument was methodically conducted: it would be a bold thing to say that of a discourse in which the first remark is that the truth necessarily must be so-and-so, and the second that it "incontestibly" is precisely so. But I do say that Buckle was reasonably entitled to call Hume's method deductive. How could the "natural history" of religion be written otherwise, on the simple datum that within historic times all mankind were polytheists? <sup>1</sup> As to the psychological hypothesis being "based on observation," Mr Stephen need hardly fear challenge. I would repeat that Buckle does not seem ever to have held that a process of deduction was one in which the mind worked *in vacuo*. But, finally, the "observed fact" of Hume and Mr Stephen is not a fact at all. "It is a matter of fact incontestible," says Hume, "that about 1700 years ago all mankind were polytheists" ["idolaters" was the word in the first edition]. The "incontestible" would be a sufficiently extravagant term to use seriously in the face of Cudworth's great treatise; but apart from that, the "1700 years ago" is grossly misleading, not to say disingenuous. The main drift of Hume's essay is to show that Christians were and are as truly polytheists as were the pagans; and he must have known that forms of monotheism, no more inconsistent than the Christian, prevailed among the thinkers of many nations long before the Christian era. His "incontestible fact" is a mere dialectic device to mask his main line of argument. Mr Stephen is unfortunate in his endorsement.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Compare Huxley: "Hume anticipated the results of modern investigation in declaring fetishism and polytheism to be" etc.—*Hume*, p. 157.

<sup>2</sup> On Hume's general preference of deduction to induction, see the decisive passages cited by Buckle, iii. 343-7.

The statement, again, that Buckle represented the deductive method of Hume to be "favourable to theology" is an extreme misconception of his plain declaration. What he said was that the writings of Hume *failed to influence his countrymen generally* because they were deductive; and as to the fact of the failure no one who knows Scotland can raise the slightest question. Hume at this moment is out of all comparison less popular in his native country than many writers very much inferior to him, who attack or undermine orthodox religion by purely inductive methods. The writings of Professor Robertson Smith, for instance, have made infinitely more sensation than Hume's "Natural History of Religion," and have done much more to shake faith among the general population, though Hume's argumentation is by far the more comprehensive. Throughout the English-speaking world, indeed, Paine and Colenso have made far more unbelievers than Hume ever did. And the explanation, I take it, is simply that given by Buckle, and misunderstood by Mr Stephen.

§ 15. Mr Stephen is thus seen to be on the whole ill-grounded in his study of the work he criticises, and ill-justified in his critical positions. His criticism as a whole, so far as it has any coherence, is summed up in his sentence: "Granting everything that Buckle could wish, we should still be almost as far as ever from anything like a 'law.'" Now there is, I repeat, no less and no more force in this very loosely-worded objection than in the objection that Darwin has given us no law of variation. Buckle's generalisations are as truly laws, in their sphere and degree, as Darwin's. If these are not laws of progress, none have been discovered. Has Mr Stephen any law to give us, after all his allusions to "deep" forces and tendencies? I do not ask this by way of mere *tu quoque* (though some of us do make bold to record a *tu quoque* when Mr Stephen says Buckle was an amateur in philosophy), but in order to insist on the extreme difficulty of the case. Once more, who are the experts? Who has succeeded if Buckle failed? Mr Lecky? Sir Henry Maine? Dr

Freeman, that doughty generaliser of truisms and falsisms? Carlyle, the theosophist? Hegel? The voluminous Schäffle? Mommsen? Comte? If Mr Stephen is to be understood as claiming that Comte's "law of the three stages" is "something like a law," so much the worse for his logic. As to the practical question, I find Mr Andrew Lang remarking<sup>1</sup> that the Comtian theory "is not now held by many people who study the history of man"; and Mr Lang is probably as weighty an authority on these matters as Mr Stephen, if it must come to a question of authority, though his judgment too needs revision. And Professor Sidgwick stands unchallenged in his statement that Comte, Spencer, and Schäffle, the three most distinguished sociologists of their respective countries, "exhibit the most complete and conspicuous absence of agreement or continuity in their treatment of the fundamental questions of social evolution."<sup>2</sup> Nay, has not Mr Stephen himself said in so many words, that the dream of creating a science of sociology (*i.e.*, one which should, in Buckle's words, "unite into a single science all the laws of the mental and physical world") is "so idle that a sense of the ludicrous prevents us from sympathising unreservedly with Buckle's regret at its disappearance" in his own case. Yet this idle dream is cherished by the three sociologists mentioned, notoriously by Comte, for whom Mr Stephen has so much respect. So that Comte is to be esteemed for having clung to an inexpressibly ludicrous delusion, while Buckle is to be laughed-at even on giving it up, and finally set aside because he yet undertook so extensive a task as he did, instead of limiting himself to some still more restricted problem. The question whether Mr Stephen ever clearly represents to his own mind the nature of the case he is trying, is but one of many problems raised by the singular conduct of his argument. In one of his spasms of generosity he goes on to admit that "the pursuit of the phantom" led Buckle "in a right direction";<sup>3</sup> but, in the

<sup>1</sup> *Custom and Myth*, 2nd ed., p. 219.

<sup>2</sup> *Scope and Method of Pol. Econ.*, p. 46.

<sup>3</sup> Article cited, p. 676.

circumstances, the concession serves not so much to do justice to the man he is criticising as to give a fresh illustration of the inconsequence of his own thought. If Buckle went "in a right direction," how came it, once more, that he "completely failed" to reach any "valuable results?" If there be any meaning in words, going in the right direction is the gist of the valuable results attained by any thinker in human history. If Buckle be held to have moved in a right direction, it must be precisely because he did attain some valuable results, for only by such results can movement in a right direction be measured. And one would have thought that the energetic application of immense masses of luminously arranged knowledge to the illustration of great principles was something of a "result," as times go. A critic who complains of the "provokingly loose" language of the "brilliant man of letters" had need be a little less incoherent than this.

§ 16. When one turns from Mr Stephen's one-sided inquiry to the book which, after all, was only meant to be an introduction to the history of civilisation in England; when one reads the remarkable passage<sup>1</sup> in which the writer avows how much he had underrated the vastness of his undertaking, and overrated his own powers; when one thinks of his premature death and his piteous cry at the thought of his unfinished book, one does feel that there is just a touch of the unchivalrous in a hostile criticism which never once takes account of the last item, and which was avowedly penned at a time when the subject seemed to be sufficiently discredited already. Mr Stephen would probably call it a very shallow and materialistic thing to say, but I cannot help thinking that if Buckle had lived twenty years longer, the mere impact of his continued self-expression would have gone far to keep up his prestige, even among literary readers. Mr Stephen would then probably not have attacked him as he did; Mr Clodd would have found a different beginning for his "Myths and Dreams"; and, looking to the credit for historic philosophy that can

<sup>1</sup> III. 188-9.

be secured by a copious chronicler like Professor Freeman, by sheer force of volubility, supported by wide knowledge of detail, Buckle's equipment of knowledge and confessed faculty of luminous arrangement—not a common faculty even in these enlightened days, when, with Mr Stephen, we can smile so at the period of the First Exhibition—might have kept him in some esteem among the specialists, whoever they are.

It may not be amiss, in conclusion, to compare Buckle's performance with the most ambitious work of Mr Stephen, the "History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century," alike as to the knowledge and the capacity exhibited. I have elsewhere remarked that "it never occurs to Mr Stephen, in writing the history of the English 'Thought' of last century, to take any trouble about estimating the nature, amount, and value of the thinking done in connection with physical science."<sup>1</sup> The truth is, Mr Stephen had neither the requisite industry nor the necessary information. As I once heard him wittily admit in a lecture: "Having been educated at an English university, I know nothing of physical science." And yet he professes to make light on scientific grounds of the whole work of Buckle, who had the knowledge Mr Stephen lacked, and who has in a few chapters given us those general views on the evolution of the English thought of last century which Mr Stephen has failed to reach in two volumes. The latter's work shows none of the faculty for luminous arrangement which he incidentally confesses to have been possessed by Buckle; and it is disfigured in many places, as Buckle's hardly ever is, by that reckless injustice and unjust recklessness of which we have seen so much in the essay above discussed. I do not think that such a critic is the man to put Buckle out of court by his authority, and to settle for instructed men whether Buckle was or was not a competent specialist. I even presume to turn the impeachment back on the critic.

<sup>1</sup> *Thomas Paine : an Investigation*, p. 37 (Forder, 28 Stonecutter Street).

### CHAPTER III.

#### THEODORE PARKER'S CRITICISM.

I HAVE said that Mr Stephen's critique has been held to put in the most effective fashion what can be said all round against Buckle's performance; but there are better grounded critics than he, and, as we shall see, there have been weightier criticisms. I have freely admitted, and no student will dispute, that Buckle is inexact and unsatisfying in his more metaphysical generalisations; and if the value of his work depended on these he would indeed have to be set aside, not as being on the wrong line, but as not having travelled far enough on the right line. And inasmuch as he begins his book with a philosophical inquiry, and formally rests his exposition on the principles there set forth, it might seem as if to admit imperfection in his philosophy were to surrender the main ground. But that would be a misconception. Even if we went so far as, with his German translator, to *perhorresciren*<sup>1</sup> his philosophy as "an incomplete thought (*Denken*), which makes even crude empiricism pass for philosophy," we could still say with the same critic that he offers us "a brilliant and thoroughly true program of the progress of the human species"; and for my part I cannot quite share the German horror at the meagreness of his metaphysic. He fairly avows in his first chapter that his attitude towards the metaphysical *method* is one of rejection; his argument against that as a means of explaining history is perfectly conclusive; and when he declares that "fortunately for the object of this work, the believer in the possibility of a science of history is not called upon to hold either the doctrine of predestined events or that of freedom of the

<sup>1</sup> Ruge, cited by Vorländer.



will," the philosophical student at least cannot say that the book stands or falls by any philosophical principle save that common to the physical sciences. The laxities of philosophical expression are rather literary than logical flaws.

# I.

It is not so easy, perhaps, to repel the objection of Theodore Parker to the arrangement of the book as it stands. Parker's criticism seems to have been, with one exception,<sup>1</sup> that which interested Buckle most of those which he lived to read, and it might well do so, being the performance of a very widely read and exceptionally conscientious critic.<sup>2</sup> After praising highly the author's erudition and ability, Parker complains that "the plan of Mr Buckle's book is quite faulty, both confused and defective. When he began to print, we doubt if he knew exactly what he would do. At first he appears to intend writing a universal history of civilisation; he lays down his rules accordingly and begins his work," but, finding the difficulties too great, abandons the scheme and takes a single country.<sup>3</sup> The gist of the objection here, if not the separate propositions, is borne out by a survey of the analytical table of contents for chapters fifth, sixth, and seventh. The first four chapters read as if planned for the general scheme which Buckle abandoned; the restriction of the plan to England is suddenly announced at the beginning of the fifth chapter, which ought to treat *generally* of the influence of religion, literature, and govern-

<sup>1</sup> The critique in the *Saturday Review*, 11th July 1857, by a Mr Sanders.

<sup>2</sup> "Before he [Parker] undertook to review Mr Prescott's popular histories, he spent all the leisure time which he could command during seven months in reading the authorities. He read everything excepting some MSS. in the possession of Mr Prescott himself, and thus he verified nearly every citation made in the eight volumes which were under review" (Weiss's *Life*, ii. 10). Writing in his journal in 1839, that if he "had the knowledge" he would criticise a work of Villemain, Parker observes that "the habit, so common in America, of getting all your knowledge from the author you review, and then censuring him, is villainous and unworthy" (*Ibid.*, p. 9).

<sup>3</sup> *Works*, xii. 139-140.

ment, as the others had treated generally of their themes, but which is restricted to the concrete cases of the four countries with which the Introduction has to deal. Then we go back in chapter sixth to the "Origin of History and State of Historical Literature during the Middle Ages"; and though the treatment of France, Spain, and Scotland is planned in correlation in the fifth chapter, the surveys are made on different schemas. But what is the effect of all this but to show that Buckle, planning an encyclopædic survey on new principles, did not give his book that balance of form which belongs to the manipulation of a study in its most advanced stages. Suppose we were to say of his "Introduction" that it is in reality a series of books, should we have done his reputation any disservice? Four admirable historical treatises indeed could be, and one day probably will be, made of his surveys of French, Spanish, Scotch, and modern English history. But while he is thus entitled to the credit of having ably elucidated the histories of four countries, he is none the less to be credited with having made these four surveys subservient to a general idea of social evolution; for each one is the illustration of a particular social tendency in prominent action; and all are thus conducive to a general sociology. That achievement remains substantially unaffected by the imperfect construction of his prolegomena. His book is indeed, as Mr Huth remarks, the fragment of a fragment; but it is yet a mass from which a whole troop of workers may quarry material. When we can point to any work of equal novelty and equal range which was put forth by its projector in a logically perfect form, we may make light of Buckle in comparison for his formal defects; but the ideal work will be hard to find.

There is, in the same way, a concrete truth and an abstract harmlessness in Parker's criticism of Buckle's famous list of authorities. It is at first sight a shrewd thrust enough:—

"No Englishman has written a more elaborate book in this century. It is learned also, though not so comprehensive in its erudition as we

might wish. The list of 'authors quoted' occupies fifteen pages, and comprises about six hundred titles and perhaps 3000 volumes. Half as many more are referred to in the copious and well-studied notes which enrich the volume. Notwithstanding the imposing array which this catalogue presents at the first glance, its deficiencies, in a writer who thinks so meanly of the labours of his predecessors, are more remarkable than its seeming completeness. Not to speak of ancient writers, of whom only three are referred to, no mention is made of Grotius, Prideaux, Vico, Creuzer, Du Cange, Duchesne, Malte-Brun, Becker [W. A. ?—For what? "Gallus"?], W. von Humboldt, Wachler, Hegel ('Phil. d. Geschichte'), Müller (J. v. and C. O.), Fichte ('Grundz. d. gegenw. Zeitalt.'), Schelling ('Phil. d. Myth.'), Boeckh, Wachsmuth [why not also Hermann?], Eichhorn, Savigny, Raumer, Heeren ('Gesch. d. Syst. d. Eur. Staat.'), Thierry, and a host of others whose writings bear more or less directly on the subject of this volume. The author speaks in the highest terms of the works of German philosophers, but names but four or five German books in his catalogue,—none of which are the works of the masters in the philosophy of history."<sup>1</sup>

It must be confessed that the plan of Buckle's list of "authors quoted" is not fully intelligible. It had apparently been originally framed to cover all of his book that he lived to write, for it includes many of the Spanish and Scotch authorities on which he draws in the latest portion; but it cannot have been meant to cover the proposed sections on Germany and the United States. Lists for these sections would have had to be compiled if he had lived to write them. But, as it is, the published list is far short of including all the authorities he actually did use, as Parker himself points out. So early as his ninth note he cites Potter's "*Esprit de l'Eglise*," Tomline's "*Refutation of Calvinism*," and Southey's "*Book of the Church*," no one of which appears in his list; in the eleventh note he quotes from Boswell's Johnson, and in the fifteenth several passages from Plato, who is quoted more than once later; yet neither Boswell nor Plato is in the list, though Diodorus Siculus and Diogenes Laertius are. This is the way throughout; and I can suggest no rule for the omissions. Plato cannot be omitted as yielding only philosophical suggestions, for Kant is included; and if Buckle had made

<sup>1</sup> *Works*, xii. 108.

any use of Wachsmuth's "Europäische Sittengeschichte," or "Entwurf einer Theorie der Geschichte," one would suppose he must have thought it worth mentioning. J. von Müller, certainly, could avail him little. On the other hand, it is extremely unlikely that he should not have seen the works of K. O. Müller, Böeckh, and Wachsmuth, on Greece, most of them long before translated into English. He does not, indeed, notice Wachsmuth's early pages where we might expect him to; but this, and his omission to include the two writers in his list, may reasonably be put down to the fact that he had no thought of sketching the civilisation of Greece. He includes in his list Heeren's books on the trade of the African and Asiatic nations (he omits the "Political History of Ancient Greece," though he cites it in notes), because he specially deals with the civilisation of those regions in his second chapter, and at least once controverts Heeren; but for his few remarks on Greece the stores of Böeckh and Wachsmuth were not required, especially when he had Grote and Thirlwall. Vico and Fichte, though they are not in his list, he expressly characterises<sup>1</sup> in a remark on the "confusion between illustration and verification" which "appears to be the universal failing of those who, like Vico and Fichte, speculate upon historical phenomena *a priori*." Of Vico, however, he again speaks as a man of perhaps vaster genius than Montesquieu (whom he praises very highly), adding that "though his 'Scienza Nuova' contains the most profound views on ancient history, they are rather glimpses of truth than a systematic investigation of any one period."<sup>2</sup> On Grotius, again, though he does not catalogue him, he passes a high encomium while pointing out his primitiveness.<sup>3</sup> That he should make no use of Prideaux is surely not much to his discredit; what could he have done with him but point to him as a minor figure in the development of

<sup>1</sup> Ch. iii., note 8.

<sup>2</sup> II. 314 (ch. on Histor. Lit. in France, note 131). See another laudatory reference in the next chapter, p. 373.

<sup>3</sup> II. 40 (ch. on French Intellect, note 108).

systematic historiography? Could Parker have supposed that Buckle did not know all of these writers' works? The phrasing of his criticism has the effect of making the complaint that Buckle's "learning" was not comprehensive enough in respect of his not having cited, among others, the names of these extremely well-known authors. Du Cange and Duchesne and Malte-Brun, again, are in the same case; Buckle must have known of them, and very likely possessed their works,<sup>1</sup> but as his list of authorities was not a mere parade of learning he did not cite them, not having used them in his book. The fact that he used so many authorities whom he did not catalogue should have made Parker word his criticism differently. We can but surmise that the list was drawn up some time before the final revision of the MS.,<sup>2</sup> and that many references were afterwards added to the notes without being added to the list, or else we must just conclude that the list was made without sufficient circumspection.

As for the implied demand that Buckle's work should have dealt with such philosophers as Hegel and Schelling, it proceeds on a partial misconception of Buckle's purpose. His German list is indeed longer than Parker says: it includes at least nine Germans whose books are named in the original, and about a dozen more who are used in translation; while yet others are cited in the notes. Raumer's "History of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries" he actually does catalogue: the oversight here was Parker's. But it was no part of Buckle's aim to analyse and refute the leading German transcendental schemes of history. Hegel and Schelling he must have known at least as well as Fichte: Hegel's "Philosophy of History" even lay easy to his hand in the Bohn translation; and I notice one or two coincidences in his and

<sup>1</sup> I learn that Malte-Brun appears in the sale catalogue of his library.

<sup>2</sup> Part of the book, we know, was written as early as 1850 (Huth's *Life*, i. 37); and in 1851 he talked of bringing out his first volume "next year" (Miss Taylor's Biog. Notice in *Misc. Works*, p. xvii.). But he rewrote most of what he had done; and chapters iii. and v. were written in 1853.

Hegel's comments. But with Hegel's hollow machinery of Idea and Spirit and God, Subjective Spirit and Absolute Object, and so forth, what could Buckle do but reject it? And, rejecting it, why should he discuss it in detail any more than he did Fichte? In complaining of his predecessors, he did not undertake to criticise them *seriatim*. Herder he catalogued and quoted because he could vitally profit by him, as perhaps he and his readers might sometimes have done by Hegel; and he certainly refers at least twice to the unimportant Friedrich Schlegel *without* cataloguing him; but while all this may look capricious, it does not justify the imputation of defective erudition. If he had been mainly concerned about his reputation in that direction, he could easily have made his *list* complete enough. That he should not have made use of Heeren's series of modern histories is indeed a little surprising; and it can hardly be doubted that he would at least have done so when he came to deal with Germany. Thierry he must have known, and must have used if he had come to his book proper—the History of Civilisation in England. So with Savigny and Eichhorn, and Wilhelm von Humboldt, whom we know him to have read.<sup>1</sup> But I confess to doubting whether he could have done much with Creuzer at any stage of his work, though he happened to possess the book.

## II.

Parker's criticism, then, is thus far inconclusive and imperfectly fair. One or two of his objections which are well-grounded will be noticed hereafter; but another, which at first sight seems the most telling of all, strikes me on analysis as again missing the mark. He objects to Buckle's theory of the influence of natural phenomena in producing the terroristic phases of Hindu religion, that "these Hindu conceptions of God are less hideous than the Deity set forth by our own Jonathan Edwards. No Hindu

<sup>1</sup> *Life*, ii. 97.

can believe in eternal damnation. Siva and Dourga would have shrunk (!) from the thought of tormenting new-born babes forever and forever." <sup>1</sup> Here, apart from the nonsense about Siva and Dourga, we have an apparently forcible argument against Buckle's doctrine: the hell of Christian Europe, in the temperate zone, is a more cruel and awful conception than even the horrible fiend-figures of the mythology of India. But let us see clearly what Buckle's argument was.

"In these complicated subjects, the wider any generalisation is, the greater will be the chance of apparent exceptions; and when the theory covers a very large space, the exceptions may be innumerable, and yet the theory remain perfectly accurate. The two fundamental propositions which I hope to have demonstrated are—1st, That there are certain natural phenomena which act on the human mind by exciting the imagination; and 2ndly, That those phenomena are much more numerous out of Europe than in it. If these two propositions are admitted, it inevitably follows that in those countries where the imagination has received the stimulus, *some specific effects must have been produced*; unless, indeed, the effects have been neutralised by other causes. Whether or not there have been antagonistic causes is immaterial to the truth of the theory, which is based on the two propositions just stated." "In Greece, Nature was *less* dangerous, less intrusive, and less mysterious than in India. In Greece, therefore, the human mind was *less* appalled, and *less* superstitious. . . . In Greece, the causes of fear being *less* abundant, the expression of terror was *less* common." <sup>2</sup>

It is, then, a question of comparison. Everywhere, especially for primitive men, there are *some* natural causes of terror, but in India they were and are relatively great, and in Greece relatively small. Buckle, indeed, seems to have under-estimated the natural causes of terror in Greece; and to secure precision on that side of the question, it will be well to consider here the summary of Wachsmuth: <sup>3</sup>—

"The land and seas of the primitive seats of the Greeks still bear the traces of violent change. . . . That those seas have been subject to irregular tides from the earliest times is proved by various traditions,

<sup>1</sup> Works, vol. cited, p. 146.

<sup>2</sup> I. 131-2, 140-2.

<sup>3</sup> *Histor. Antiq. of the Greeks*, Eng. tr., Introd.

such as that of the Gygian deluge, the struggle between Poseidon and a land-protecting deity for the possession of a certain tract of country; the rising of Rhodes from the sea, and its subsequent inundation; of the separation of the islands of Cos and Nisyros; the settlement of the floating island of Delos; the Symplegades, Scylla, and Charybdis; the lawless current of the Euripus, which had once grown into a proverb among the Greeks, may be regarded as a memorial of the ancient anarchy of nature. The Grecian seas are still agitated by sudden tempests and impetuous whirlpools; and even the rivers of this region partake of the instability of the ocean waves; they overflow and stagnate by turns; and if, as it has been supposed, the contemplation of calmly-flowing streams engenders habits of study and reflection, the rivers of Greece were calculated to produce very different effects upon the minds of the natives.

"The concussions to which the earth was a prey were augmented by the struggles of the sea with subterranean fires; and the youthful race of the aboriginal inhabitants exercised their courage amidst natural phenomena as appalling as they were unexampled, and commemorated them in fictions of the wars between the Titans and the Gods, the piling up of mountains and the burning of forests, as well as by animated traditions of inland lakes contracting into rivers; and the drying up of valleys, like those of the Thessalian Peneus and the Laconian Eurotas, which are still attested by the jagged rocks and indented ravines of the mountain districts of Greece. Through the general history of the Grecian States, they are continued in a succession of earthquakes, which overthrew cities, as Sparta, Sicyon, Rhodes, together with the towns of Lycia and Caria; or covered them with the waves, as in ancient times Arne and Midea in Bœotia, as well as Helice and Bura in Achaia; cast down mountain-tops, as that of Taygetus; tore asunder islands, as Therasia and Thera; or covered them with the sea, as Chryse, near Lemnos; changed capes into islands, as Atalante by Locris; cast up others from the depths of the sea, as Hiera and Thia, near Thera; dried up rivers, like the Bœotian Melas, or converted them into volcanoes, as on Lemnos, the abode of Hephæstus, the Arcadian Lycaëum, and Methone in Argolis."

All the details here, of course, are not equally valid; but even where a myth is cited, the fact of the myth's existence is still a testimony; and the mass of the evidence is trustworthy.<sup>1</sup> Broadly speaking, the fact that the

<sup>1</sup> The chief of Wachsmuth's references are:—Diodorus Siculus, v. 47; xii. 59; xv. 48; Orph. *Argon.*, 1278; Apollodorus, ii. 1, 4; iii. 14, 1; Pindar, *Ol.*, vii. 100 sqq.; † Plato, *Phædo*, 90; Hesiod, *Theogony*, 629 sqq.; Thucydides, i. 128; iii. 87, 89; Strabo (ed. Casaubon), i. 49, 57, 59, 60; viii. 367, 378, 384, 397, 485; ix. 403, -6, -7; x. 447, 488; Polybius, ii. 41;



Greeks were a sea-going people, in stormy seas, must count for much (though, on the other hand, sea-going develops courage); and the conditions in general were such as to stimulate their religious faculties freely. The contrast between Greece and India, however, is at once obvious, even on the side of primary natural phenomena. Indian floods and heats and cyclones dwarf all the phenomena of Hellas; the immense jungles and deserts create sensations which the little clans of Greece could never know; and, as Buckle notes, the whole line of coast from the Ganges to Cape Comorin has not one safe and capacious harbour; while Bombay is the only harbour on the Malabar and Coromandel coasts that is safe all the year round. And the secondary phenomena are no less impressive. The annual death-roll of human beings slain in India by wild beasts and snakes is to this day enormous; and the pestilences are just as tremendously in excess of the experience of Greece. Above all, the factor of famine, which he oddly omitted to mention,<sup>1</sup> has counted for everything in India, and almost for nothing in ancient Greece. Thus on the side of material environment the difference is substantially as wide as Buckle represented.

It is soon apparent, however, that this is not an exhaustive account of the forces at work. Buckle's own method, rather than his practice, leads us to take note of the primarily physical as well as the primarily mental reactions of climate, and of the connection between physique and cost of mind. Peschel, who misconceives him so grossly<sup>2</sup>

v. 88; Pliny, iv. 23; Pausanias, ii. 7, 1; viii. 33, 2; Seneca, *Quæst. Nat.* ii. 26; Justin, xxx. 4; Dio Cassius, lx. 29. On earthquakes he notes that Laconia, Eubœa, and Bœotia are by Strabo called "easily agitated"; and that "according to Aristot., *Meteor.* ii. 8, earthquakes were much more frequent on the Hellespont, in Achaia, Lycion, and Eubœa; Delos was distinguished as being seldom convulsed, Herod., vi. 98; comp. Thucyd., ii. 8; Plin. *Hist. Nat.*, iv. 22. Concerning the frequency and violence of the earthquakes during the Peloponnesian war, see Thucyd., i. 23." Further, "Onomacritus' prediction of the destruction of an island near Lemnos (Herod., vii. 6) implies the occurrence of earlier events of a similar nature."

<sup>1</sup> He does mention it in a later part of his book, ii. 426.

<sup>2</sup> See below, chapter vi.

on the point of the relation between food supply and numbers, rightly notes, though with a weak explanation, that the Hindu mind must have been profoundly affected by the nature of the general diet.<sup>1</sup>

"In the time of the Vedas the consumption of animal food was not yet prohibited; and at the same time the Vedic religion was not darkened by the creation of bloodthirsty deities, nor filled with horrors and terrors as in later times.<sup>2</sup> The depression of spirits, the inclination towards the prodigious and the grotesque, the weariness of life, the dread of an endless series of transmigrations, first began to develop among the Hindus simultaneously with the transition to a purely vegetable diet. Probably every one knows by experience that our mental functions are dependent upon nutriment; for the genuine unconscious sleep, which is profound and refreshing, flies from us when the stomach is heavily overloaded. But hunger also, like all other cravings, even if partially satisfied, exercises control over the imagination. This biological fact was and still is the origin of the rigid fastings prescribed by religions so widely different, and made use of by Shamans in every quarter of the world, when they wish to enter into communication with the invisible powers. As often as the usual order of nutriment is interrupted or even disturbed, as soon as it ceases to be regular, the imagination acquires unusual power, and in this shaken or enfeebled condition is more susceptible to that which it ascribes to supersensual operations."

It is instructive, as showing how erratically sociologists can argue, to find the same writer, on the next leaf, deciding that "the activity of the imagination is *quite independent* of whether the daily aliment consists *exclusively* of vegetable or animal substances"—this because he recollects that the flesh-eating and fish-eating Icelanders have poetic legends. There is no need to hesitate over any such datum: the plain fact is that the slightly-fed race, in the more oppressive climate, will tend to be less energetic physically and more dreamy and visionary mentally than the well-fed; and this brings us to a main source of the difference between the Greek and Hindu mythologies. It was not merely that the lowland Hindu was surrounded by a more overwhelming Nature, but that

<sup>1</sup> *The Races of Man*, Eng. tr., pp. 311-312.

<sup>2</sup> [The point as to whether these deities were not pre-Vedic and aboriginal need not here be discussed.—J. M. R.]

he also (by reason of Nature) came to face his environment with a less vigorous manhood. We must take all the phenomena into account together, for the complete explanation. The distance between the athletic Greek and his Gods was comparatively small, in terms of his self-confidence as well as in terms of the less awful aspects of his environment; the distance between the Hindu and his Gods was great, in terms of his physical abjection as well as in terms of the tremendousness of Nature; the effect of Nature on thought being thus seen to be operant through physique as well as through ideas. In the equation between organism and environment there is reaction at every point.

And here let it be observed that Buckle, following Charles Comte, did not exaggerate but rather understated the direct action of physical forces. Peschel assumes that the prohibition of animal food was the cause of the transition to vegetarianism, as if that prohibition itself did not require to be explained. It raises the whole question of the relations of the Aryan to the pre-Aryan inhabitants of India, still one of the obscurest problems of Oriental history. If we decide, with the great majority of recent investigators,<sup>1</sup> that the Aryans went to Asia from Europe, and not the other way about, it seems a reasonable surmise that already in "Vedic" times there were native populations who had long been habituated to a vegetable diet by the mere influence of the climate. The Vedic references to native "flesh-eaters" or "raw flesh-eaters"<sup>2</sup> prove only that there were such among the immediate enemies of the Aryan invaders. And the fact that the Vedas, with their testimony to a vigorous physical life, remain for us in their present state, as something isolated and far away from the historic life of India, is an evidence that the Aryan invaders ere long began to obey the laws of climate and develop a temper of passivity, and habits of introspection, imagination, and retrospection which of themselves imply a

<sup>1</sup> See Dr Isaac Taylor's work on *The Origin of the Aryans*.

<sup>2</sup> See Professor Müller's Gifford Lectures on *Physical Religion*, pp. 159-160.

decline in energy. The process, no doubt, occupied many centuries: the Vedas themselves cover a whole epoch. It was a process in the main of the absorption of the Aryan type into a type determined by the climate; and while the Aryan religious system was nominally preserved, even that gradually came to be adapted to the still germinating forces of the native populations, of which we certainly have surviving examples in Krishnaism and Sivaism, and probably also in Buddhism.<sup>1</sup> Given this general reduction of the Aryan element, by force of climate and conditions, to conformity with the "aboriginal" elements, the prohibition of flesh-eating was not a mere doctrinal result of the veneration of the cow, but the expression, so to speak, of the cosmic drift.<sup>2</sup> Climate has moulded civilisation after civilisation in India in the same way; and it remains to be seen whether the now continuous impact of occidental civilisation, which cannot of itself be transferred by reason of climatic law, can ultimately set up in Asia an intellectual force that shall reconstitute the civilisation of the acclimatised types.

That process, hard to conceive in Asia till recent years, has occurred repeatedly, is indeed always going on, in Europe. And this is another element that has to be reckoned with in the intellectual development of ancient Greece. While the mythology of India grew or fructified in the vast Indian regions, a world in themselves, with no definitely foreign interference, the cultures of ancient Greece represent a complex of four civilisations. She stood, as Heeren remarks, "in the centre of the most cultivated countries of three continents,"<sup>3</sup> and her civilisation was acted on by those of Asia Minor, Egypt, and Phœnicia—acted on, that is to say, by ideas from these. Here was a remarkable combination of those influences

<sup>1</sup> The derivation of *myth* elements in Buddhism from Krishnaism has been conclusively shown by M. Senart, *Essai sur la Légende de Buddha*. But it is further probable that the whole cult had an aboriginal basis.

<sup>2</sup> Similarly the caste law against sea voyages was led up to by the lack of harbours. Such a tabu could never have held in Greece, or in Japan.

<sup>3</sup> *Polit. Hist. of Ancient Greece*, Eng. tr., p. 14.

which, as Buckle teaches, produce the highest civilisations of all—a combination made in a special degree efficient by the democratic character of the Greek political institutions. The result was the most thoroughly humanised of all the ancient religions. Those Greeks who, “in the midst of all their civil wars, never laid waste any Grecian city, even when it was subdued,”<sup>1</sup> could not develop a vindictive and terror-striking faith, could not harbour a belief in purely and eternally evil deities, could not frame a hell.

And if ultimately the same people, or the people of the same country, did acquire such a set of beliefs, the explanation, though not merely physical, is still so in part. It may even turn out to be demonstrable that the southern climate, as soon as the Hellenes began to mix with Asiatics, tended to select a type more Asiatic than Greek. Breeding from Asiatic slaves would certainly modify the stock, and such breeding certainly took place.<sup>2</sup> Certainly the present Greek type is nearer the Syrian than the north-European. But whatever may turn out to be the true view on this head, it is possible to trace the transformation intelligibly in terms of social institutions. A comprehensive study of any civilisation must involve a careful scrutiny of the fashion in which the race carries on the most important

<sup>1</sup> Heeren, *Polit. Hist. of Ancient Greece*, Eng. tr., p. 121.

<sup>2</sup> On this see W. G. Clarke's *Peloponnesus* (1858), p. 329. Mr Clarke decides that “the great majority of Greek slaves (in the pre-Roman period) came of races physically as noble as their masters.” But in the Roman period they would naturally tend to be drawn from Syria and Egypt, as so many Roman slaves were. Mr Clarke, finally, was strongly of opinion that there is now almost no “Hellenic blood in the people of Greece, despite the survival of the language.” If this be true, it almost implies that the climate eliminated the old type, selecting others. On this, however, compare Edmond About, *La Grèce Contemporaine*, 4ième édit., 1860, pp. 34-35; and Professor Mahaffy, *Rambles and Studies in Greece*, 4th ed., 1892, pp. 368-371. These writers alike reject the “paradox” that the people of Greece are not properly Greeks, and offer personal testimony as to the continuity of the old type. Mr Mahaffy further cites Ross, Ellissen, and Hopf, as having refuted the contrary view of Fallmerayer, who coincided with Clarke. M. About and Mr Mahaffy, however, seem to proceed on different data, the latter speaking specially of blond types in the remoter districts, while the former appears to have seen Hellenic types in what the latter regards as the “mixed populations” of the towns. Neither has attempted precise characterisation or statistical estimate.

of all functions, that of reproduction. It may be laid down as a general law, in despite of Weismann, that wherever a race can be seen to decline in energy in a climate where it formerly flourished, part of the cause must be looked for in the relations of the sexes. The educated classes in Hindostan are to-day beginning to realise that a main cause of the age-long subjection and abjection of the peoples of the plains is the practice of breeding from immature females—a practice to which, despite recent denial, it is impossible to doubt that climate gave the lead, by inducing sexual maturity long before intellectual. Wherever precocious procreation takes place, whether as in hot countries by reason of this climatic inducement, reinforced by religion and custom, or, as in Ireland, by reason of priestly precaution against “immorality,” the race must present characteristics of immaturity, or inertia, or instability—features of primitive as distinguished from highly evolved types. The people will be capable of more primitive cruelty, and (save for counteracting influences) of more primitive abjection than their contemporaries.

But the breeding from immature females is only one phase of imperfect relation between the sexes, only one form of sexual vice. In Greece, vice took different but no less fatal directions. To what extent the most repulsive form of all affected the race type is a painful problem, which ought to be separately worked out; all that is certain is that it must have been in large measure destructive to virility.<sup>1</sup> And alongside of this force of degeneration there was at work that other to which it may probably be traced—the continuous subjection of women.

Many ancient thinkers could realise how social or class inequality went to ruin states; but despite the prescriptions of Plato, and the traditional example of Sparta, none seems to have realised the more intimate deadliness of an inequality which involved wholly different planes of culture for man and wife, for the two factors in the state's repro-

<sup>1</sup> Compare Ranke's *History of the Latin and Teutonic Nations*, Eng. tr., p. 313, as to the admitted effects in mediæval Italy.

duction. It is plain that in the pre-historic age the sexes in Hellas, as elsewhere, were nearly on an equality of intelligence, since the culture of each was mostly practical. The race had not long left behind the matriarchal stage,<sup>1</sup> and had thus a fund of reproductive energy, in respect of the balance of the sexes, which gave it an indefinite advantage over its patriarchal neighbours. Even in the Homeric epos, to say nothing of the status assigned to the female in the myths and in the pantheon, it is evident from the positions of Helen and Clytemnestra that there had arisen no steep disparity between men and women. But no such phenomenon as the status of a Sappho or an Aspasia can disguise the progressive differentiation of the sexes in later ages. The cultured and intellectual hetæræ were sterile: the mothers of the race, whether of the middle or of the lower class, had virtually no community of intellectual life with the men. All the culture which made Greece the flower of the Mediterranean world was a culture for men only. While they acquired geometry, astronomy, science, philosophy, the women of the family lived virtually the life of their ancestresses—a matter of household routine and petty duty, the suckling of fools and the chronicling of small-beer.

For they must ultimately be fools that are so suckled: the mental life of the mother must inevitably, in the long run, affect that of the child. It was not merely that the child had his early upbringing solely on the women's side of the house, the men seeing so little of them that the Greek sculptors never learned to model a tolerable infant; but that the children must needs reproduce in their characters the unstable relation of their parents. It is biologically impossible to go on rearing a progressive race from fathers and mothers of whom only the former live the progressive life. And inasmuch as even physically the life

<sup>1</sup> Compare M'Lennan, *Studies in Ancient History* (1876), pp. 255-309; Letourneau, *L'Évolution du Mariage et de la Famille* (1888), pp. 317-319; Millar, *Origin of the Distinction of Ranks*, 3rd ed. (1781), pp. 58-64. Starcke, *Primitive Family*, Eng. tr., p. 117, is incredulous.

of the Greek women grew more and more unhealthy to the verge of possibility, tending towards the fatal passivity of the life of the oriental harem, it must needs be that the type of the educated Greek should undergo a physical decline ; that he in his degree should approach the abjection of the Hindu, and become the clever slave of the Roman, while yet the Roman retained the superior energy of character and temperament which came of the comparative sexual equality that for a time went forward in Italy, when in Greece it was being lost.

In fine, the Greeks at the Christian era were both physically and mentally prepared to assimilate religious notions of which, as we have put it, their ancestors were incapable. Whatever may be decided as to the measure of moral gain there was in the matter—and some such relative gain is not incompatible with degeneration—there had arisen the capacity to harbour religious beliefs and doctrines of a dark and terrible kind ; and this changed capacity was partly in terms of change of physical type—that is to say, we have here one of the phases of that modification of civilisation by institutions which Buckle repeatedly posits, but a modification biologically traced in part through the specially physical side of the organism. While, however, this modification is very real, it holds equally good that on the mental side there was direct influence. The physically and temperamentally degenerate Greek, like the similarly degenerate Aryan Hindu, was doubly susceptible to the impressions of the environment ; and, inasmuch as his civilisation had been especially intellectualised, he was especially susceptible to a purely intellectual influence. Ages of ruinous civil strife, followed by irresistible conquest, wave after wave, cowed his manhood, somewhat as the overwhelming manifestations of Nature did that of the Hindu. In the Christian period, again, such catastrophes as the successive earthquakes which destroyed the splendid city of Antioch would coact with the earlier experiences which had prepared the Greek for a prostrate creed. He had become used to despotism, to unmagnanimous and un-



chivalrous war, to a grovelling adulation of an autocrat, to an autocratic ideal. He had further ceased to be capable of independent or sceptical thought; and he took his religion as he took his politics, his only notion of self-assertion being a choice of exegeses, as of emperors. Religion was for him a process of deduction from his sacred documents; and whatever lead these gave to cruel conceptions or cruel practices he was now fitted to develop. To the Greeks of the Christian era, the descendants of the Greeks who framed the dimly melancholy dream of Hades, with its touches of pain against the background of mere sad inactivity, there had gradually come the darker doctrine made definite in the Christian hell; and the changed organisms, no longer finding their ideal in the life of bodily action and all-round culture, accepted the darker creed, and passed it on to a later civilisation.

It may be well, finally, to trace briefly the sociological evolution of the Christian doctrine of hell itself.

The inquiry is a curious and interesting one, the outcome being that the Christian doctrine was derived proximately from Osirianism and Judaism, in which latter faith the idea of eternal punishment was doctrinally developed from such beginnings as we find in the Assyrian and Babylonian systems, and in Mazdeism. Zoroastrianism, as also, doubtless, the more ancient religion on which it is now seen to be based,<sup>1</sup> had a hell peopled by demons;<sup>2</sup> but the torments it promised to the wicked, though declared to be inconceivably intense, were in no way described, and were only to last three nights.<sup>3</sup> Its hell, in fact, was merely a short Purgatory—the origin of the Catholic dogma, as indicated by Paul,<sup>4</sup> and developed by the Church. It is obvious, however, that such a doctrine lent itself to intensification; and even in Mazdeism the dogma as to the un-

<sup>1</sup> Darmesteter's trans. of the *Zendavesta* ("Sacred Books of the East" series), i. Introd., pp. lvii., lxxix.; same author's *Ormuzd et Ahriman*, *passim*.

<sup>2</sup> *Zendavesta*, as cited, text, i. 24 (Farg. iii. 7).

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*, ii. 318-321 (Yasht, xxii. 2).

<sup>4</sup> 1 Cor. v. 5.

pardonable sins<sup>1</sup> (also vaguely absorbed by Christianity<sup>2</sup>) would tend to conflict with the comparatively humane doctrine of the Three Nights of torment. Once set up the categories of sheep and goats, with the principle of future punishment, and the conception of eternal torment almost necessarily arises. In the Egyptian system the doctrine of the "second death" (another idea obscurely present in Christianity<sup>3</sup>) would seem to have been the earlier, and that of eternal hell-fire the later.<sup>4</sup> So with the Jews, who at one time had merely the Assyrian belief as to the Shades,<sup>5</sup> the notion of Gehenna, with its purificatory fires,<sup>6</sup> readily developed under prolonged oppressions into a revengeful dream of a Persian hell, peopled by torturing furies, where the enemies of God<sup>7</sup> should be for ever burned in Egyptian fashion—the Jew having none of that fear of polluting the divine element which made the Mazdean reserve it for only noble purposes, and execrate the practice of burning corpses.<sup>8</sup>

So it came about that the once comparatively humane Greeks, who would not adopt the bloody sports of Rome, and in whose classic Hades only a few eminent offenders were fantastically punished for exemplary purposes, were led, partly under pre-Christian auspices, and fully under Christianity,<sup>9</sup> to adopt the dogma, theologically evolved, of an ever-burning hell for all unbelievers, great and small,

<sup>1</sup> Zendavesta, as cited, i. 9, 101 (Farg., i. 17; viii. 27).

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xii. 31; Mark iii. 28; Luke xii. 10.

<sup>3</sup> Rev. xx. 14; xxi. 8.

<sup>4</sup> Tiele, *History of the Egyptian Religion*, Eng. trans., p. 69.

<sup>5</sup> Isaiah xiv.; *cp.* Rev. A. H. Sayce on *The Bible and the Monuments* in *Variorum Bible*, sec. iii. (b); same author's *Hibbert Lectures on Babylonian Religions*, p. 364; and *The Descent of Ishtar* in "Records of the Past," vol. ii.

<sup>6</sup> Isaiah xxx. 33; lxvi. 24; 2 Kings xxiii. 10.

<sup>7</sup> Ps. ix. 17. See Schürer, *Jewish People in the Time of Christ*, Div. iii., Eng. tr. ii. 182-3; 4 Macc. x. 15; xi. 9; xiii. 15; Hershon, *Treasures of the Talmud*, ch. vi. sec. 12; xiv. sec. 49; Josephus, 2 Wars, viii. 14.

<sup>8</sup> Darmesteter's *Zendavesta*, as cited, Introd., pp. liv., lxxxix.; text, pp. 80, 110 (Farg. vii. 26; viii. 74).

<sup>9</sup> For a good account of the development of the Christian idea from previous pagan ideas, see Mr Farrer's *Paganism and Christianity* (1891), ch. vi.

man and woman, adult and infant. That dogma was embraced by the northern nations with the rest of the Christian system, and in their case also a pre-Christian notion of future punishment lent itself to the more systematic atrocity of the new creed. The early Teutons had imagined a kind of hell in which special sinners were punished very much as they were punished on earth, the practice of drowning adulterers and traitors in marshes having given rise to a vision of perpetual pollution.<sup>1</sup> Here again the worst cruelty of teaching grew up in the comparatively civilised period, and Jonathan Edwards far outdoes the Eddas. But does all this discredit Buckle's thesis that cruel religious conceptions tend to be set up by the influence of natural phenomena? Not in the least. He did not, it is true, deal with the whole of the subject, but the full statement only supplements his proposition. We still say that in countries where the natural phenomena are comparatively terrific, the autochthonous religions will be comparatively terrific. That holds true in India, Mexico, Peru; it holds true later, in the cruelty of religion in Spain and Italy. We add that, under despotisms such as prevailed in Persia, Jewry, and Egypt, the original cruelty of primitive times tends to be reinforced, and to express itself in religious dogma. We add, further, that a great dogmatic system, built up under such conditions, is fitted to conquer uncivilised races, and to deepen, on its cruel side, their original bias to cruelty. We add, finally, that a system built up as the Christian has been, is capable of mesmerising the human intelligence, even in comparatively civilised periods, and giving a sacrosanct endurance to barbarous superstitions, which otherwise could not subsist among thinking men. The doctrine of a cruel after-life made them even more cruel in this. *Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum.*

### III.

Beyond the objection above discussed to Buckle's doctrine of the effect of environment on religious dogma, and

<sup>1</sup> Rydberg's *Teutonic Mythology*, Eng. trans., 1889, pp. 371-4.

the preliminary demurrer to his choice of authorities, Parker offers few criticisms of importance. The chief is on the much-discussed point of progress in morality, which we shall have occasion to treat of in later chapters. Parker's position is that, historically as well as in individual cases, high intellectual development may coexist with low moral development. Thus the Spanish Inquisitors were men of large intellect but "of very little morality." "The conscience, the power to discern right, was so little developed that, if they were learned, they *did not know* it was wrong to tear a girl to pieces on the rack."<sup>1</sup> Obviously this supports Buckle's own doctrine, which is that the progress made in conduct is a matter of increasing knowledge enlightening the sense of duty. The opposition to Buckle on this head may therefore be left to be dealt with as conducted by more circumspect opponents.

On the point of "national character," again, Parker begs the question as against Buckle's assumption that national character is the product of national conditions. "We find," he says, "national character as the result of three factors. There is a geographical element, an ethnological element, and an institutional element. Mr Buckle admits only two, the geographical and the institutional." And Parker goes on to insist that there are clear differences between nations. But he, on his own part, should have shown that ethnological characteristics were not products of geography and institutions if he proposed to prove Buckle in error. That they are such products is the implication of Buckle's doctrine. He indeed does sometimes speak in the old way of national characteristics—as in attributing "pride" to the English and "vanity" to the French—but he has indicated the influences which tended to set up such peculiarities. And as regards the claim that racial qualities determine political development, it is obvious that the proposition only raises the question, What determined race qualities? It may indeed be argued that at a given stage of national development certain qualities have been

<sup>1</sup> P. 148.

developed by previous experience, and that these qualities may be fairly stated as having a causal influence on later experience. But it is for those who argue thus to show what the racial qualities of any given race or nation at any stage really are. On the subject of National Character, as Mr Huxley writes, "more nonsense, and often very mischievous nonsense, has been and is talked than upon any other topic."<sup>1</sup> To begin with, there is the question of discrimination of the known elements of stock in any one nation. There are a dozen historically known elements, as traceable by recorded invasion, dialect, and immigration, in the leading European nations. There are the Syrian and Egyptian elements in old Greece, which was a mixture of tribes to begin with; the Greek and Syrian and African elements in Imperial Italy, which had a medley of stocks at the opening of the historic period to begin with; there was an infusion of these mixtures in Spain, Italy, Gaul, Germany, and Britain; there were later Teutonic invasions of the South; and Saracen invasion from the East. France, the most compact of modern States, is framed of sections of very different stock, as gathered from language, lore, and physique; and Britain is at least as diverse in its stocks. In every section of every State, again, we find different types<sup>2</sup>; so that characteristics loosely called "Celtic" are found in people loosely decided to be Teutonic, and *vice versa*. In this vast medley of minute peculiarities, who shall pretend to say that there is established anything approaching to an agreed-on account of race characters, or national character? The theme is but the happy-hunting-ground of the amateur sociologist. Whatever may one day be decided on the subject, Buckle assuredly did well to make no attempt to found on any formulas proposed for it. He could see how little came of the generalisations of Montesquieu, which, after all, following as they do the clue of climate, offer the most plausible principle of discrimination. Had he occu-

<sup>1</sup> *Hume*, p 22.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Lévy-Bruhl, *L'Allemagne depuis Leibniz*, 1890, p. 179.

pied himself with improving on Montesquieu's conclusions of this nature, beyond noting a few conspicuous facts, he would but have created tenfold superfluous difficulties in an inquiry difficult enough without them, and would have missed solid results in the effort to establish laws which are still beyond proof. And for every criticism now lying against his work, there would have been a hundred.

As it is, Parker indicates the peculiar difficulty of this very problem by calling in question some of Buckle's propositions as to the state of culture in Germany and the United States. These are points presumably more capable of exact statement and settlement than any thesis as to racial character. But even as to the amount of superstition in Northern Germany, and the diffusion of literature in the States, Parker sets his authority against Buckle's, yet gives no determining evidence. The points in question will be dealt with in later chapters, as raised by other writers and as bearing on some of Buckle's main doctrines. Here it may suffice to say that Parker is in the main probably in the right in his concrete judgment, though on the point as to sociological method we must decide him to have been astray.

## CHAPTER IV.

### SOME ACADEMIC CRITICISMS.

#### § 1. PROFESSOR FISKE'S: *Academic Brow-beating*.

WHEN we seek for specialist judgments of any kind on Buckle, we realise afresh the difficulty of deciding who the specialists are. It may therefore be well, as leading up to a decision on this head, to consider a few judgments which, whether good or bad, are unquestionably academic. Professor Fiske may or may not be a specialist, but his two papers<sup>1</sup> on Buckle leave a final impression that is not one of respect. The essay on "Mr Buckle's Fallacies," he informs us, was written and published when he was only nineteen years old, and he "must not now be held responsible for all the opinions expressed in it." The only information he gives as to his present measure of responsibility, however, is that he now "of course thoroughly dissents" from his former favourable estimate of Positivism. It is thus not quite clear why he reprinted the article "without altering a single word." It certainly does great credit to his youthful abilities; and one is loth to point out the inevitable fatuities of such a performance; but the "Postscript on Mr Buckle" more than suggests that the author really stands by the gist of his juvenile criticism, so that it is necessary to take some note of it. It is right to acknowledge at once the force with which at one point it challenges Buckle's consistency—in connection, namely, with his contention, near the end of his book, that the prompting of the emotions in regard to the problem of a future state is logically convincing, on the ground that

<sup>1</sup> "Mr Buckle's Fallacies" and "Postscript on Mr Buckle," reprinted in the volume *Darwinism and other Essays*. London and New York, 1879.

"the emotions are as much a part of us as the understanding: they are as truthful; they are as likely to be right. . . . They obey fixed laws; . . . they run in sequences; they have their logic and method of inference."<sup>1</sup> If this were true, asks the young writer, "what would be the use of making any distinction at all," as Buckle does, "between intellect and feeling?" The challenge is unanswerable; and it has only to be said in explanation that the passage is a pathetic proof of the strain Buckle's mind had undergone shortly before writing it, on the death of his mother. It is the cry of the stricken heart,<sup>2</sup> premonitory, too, of the end, which can be traced to the extreme impoverishment of Buckle's physique at this period of grief and toil. This granted, there is little more to be said of Mr Fiske's youthful criticism. He naturally missed then, and he has not redeemed since, the opportunity of decisively formulating the psychological laws of the interrelation of knowledge and moral practice; and his whole criticism of Buckle's substantially sound and profoundly important law as to the nature of social progress only multiplies confusion. To allude to the "moral law that governments shall not interfere with trade," by way of refuting the dictum of Mackintosh, Condorcet, Kant, and Buckle, that "morality admits of no discoveries," is to show a distinctly immature intelligence. In other respects, the youth is father to the man; and the early Mr Fiske exhibits many of the tendencies of the later, especially in the matter of assuming to possess knowledge not really possessed. The young man's deliverances and reasonings on prehistoric civilisation are, not unnaturally, ignorant and worthless; and he falls very

<sup>1</sup> III. 378.

<sup>2</sup> Compare the passage with the unworthy judgment of George Eliot: "He impresses me as an *irreligious*, conceited man" (*Life*, ii. 64). How worthless the novelist's estimates of character could sometimes be may be seen by comparing her "malicious" aversion to Buckle with her extravagant praise of Mr Wilkie Collins as one whose "sturdy uprightness" "makes all opinion and all occupation (!) respectable" (*Ibid.*, p. 65). This caprice of critical attitude is perhaps to some extent sexual. At other times Mr Collins might have been found conceited, and Buckle (who might very well be so described) gifted with a "sturdy uprightness" which—&c.



far below the level of some of his argumentation when, crudely reasoning (after the fashion of Comte and some preceding teleologists) that every *early* civilisation has the institutions which are best for it, he decides that "the change from fetishism to polytheism" was accomplished *without scepticism*. For the rest, the young critic misapprehends, and, like Mr Stephen, misstates the force of Buckle's doubts as to the doctrine of heredity, representing him<sup>1</sup> as "flatly contradicting" the principle involved; as making the "assertion that human faculties do not develop";<sup>2</sup> as "rejecting"<sup>3</sup> the "law of hereditary transmission"; and as "wishing to show that the faculties of men do not improve."<sup>4</sup> These are, of course, extreme misstatements, as the critic's own extract from Buckle (p. 145) shows. What Buckle did was simply to insist, and rightly to insist, on the fallacy of the fashion in which the general doctrine of the transmission of qualities is usually arrived at and stated.<sup>5</sup> He was remiss in not fully grasping and applying the deductive argument, but his demand for an adequate induction is not yet met, and Mr Fiske's facile juvenilities leave the difficulties of the case untouched.

But against Mr Fiske's later criticism there lies a graver indictment than that of juvenility. It is pretexted by Mr Stuart Glennie's "Pilgrim Memories," to which performance Mr Fiske is liberal of praise, by way of the better effecting the humiliation of the dead lion against whom Mr Stuart

<sup>1</sup> Vol. cited, p. 139.

<sup>2</sup> P. 144.

<sup>3</sup> P. 144.

<sup>4</sup> P. 148.

<sup>5</sup> Lewes (*Physiology of Common Life* (1859), ii. 376) also overstates Buckle's doubts as to heredity, which had special regard to the transmission of mental qualities. Though Lewes observed that Buckle's remarks "must excite the physiologist's astonishment," he proceeds to show very fully that Buckle's distrust of the ordinary inductions was well justified; offering only a very doubtful statement of the chances of inheritance of mental gifts. I have no doubt that Buckle would have given his assent to Lewes's general line of argument had he lived to deal with it. Mr Huth notices (*Life*, i. 180, note) that "Buckle himself had a strong suspicion that superior intellectual power was inheritable (*Posth. Works*, i. 326, 593, and *Lect. on the Inf. of Women*). . . ." Buckle really seems to have anticipated some of the objections of the school of Weismann.

Glennie had lifted his unadventurous heel. I should be surprised if, out of any dozen fairly qualified critics, setting out with no animus against Buckle, more than one or two differed from me on the proposition that Mr Stuart Glennie's book is well-nigh worthless on the face of it, untrustworthy as a report, egotistic as a compilation, impotent as a treatise. On the first head, Mr Huth's *Life* furnishes some interesting details; and the student of Mr Stuart Glennie's philosophic plans and philosophic performance will probably not be slow to appreciate the historian's chuckle over the fellow-traveller who proposed to write a great book in two years. At that fellow-traveller's preposterous account of the man who spent twenty years in study before beginning his book, Mr Fiske has eagerly grasped, in his zeal to discredit the dead thinker; and we have in consequence the following exhibition of critical judgment:—

“While Mr Stuart-Glennie seems to have his whole soul stirred within him by the historic associations clustering about the places visited, and is moved to reflections always interesting and often suggestive, Mr Buckle, on the other hand, though sufficiently alive to the beauties of nature, seems quite oblivious to historic memories. At the sepulchre of Christ his thoughts were mainly on political economy, the state of society, and the habits of the people. In such trivial details some light is thrown, perhaps, on that lack of intellectual sympathy with the past which was one of Mr Buckle's most notable defects as a historian.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Vol. cited, p. 202.

In Mr Huth's *Life of Buckle* (ii. 190, 220, &c., and Appendix) will be found a stringent criticism of Mr Glennie's treatment of his dead fellow-traveller in his *Pilgrim Memories*, and in the third edition of the latter work (1880) will be found a preface replying to Mr Huth's strictures. With these we are here concerned only in so far as they show that Mr Glennie's picture of Buckle as a disputant is carefully designed to make out Mr Glennie's invincible superiority. In regard to Mr Glennie's modest claim (preface cited, *end*) to be “the continuator, on less inadequate principles, of the work he [Buckle] initiated,” it may suffice to transcribe the three formulas he puts forward as constituting such continuation. They are:—

1. “*The fundamental Cause of Historical Phenomena is the Relation between Social Conditions of Physical and Moral Want and Social Conditions of diffused Knowledge, common Tradition, and organised Authority; and this Relation is made effective by the great Individualities born of these conditions.*”

Criticism is indeed not in a hopeful state when a writer of reputation can without exciting instant derision put forward this grotesque comparison between the sympathetic endowments of Buckle and Mr Stuart Glennie, on the strength of the egregious narrative supplied by the latter. It is, however, of a piece with the rest of the critique. The "postscript" is simply a string of contemptuous phrases, supported by no illustration, and apparently not checked by any fresh study of Buckle's book. That at least is the most charitable explanation that can be given of Mr Fiske's assertion<sup>1</sup> that Buckle put forward his work "as the *Novum Organum* of historical science"; and even on such an assumption one is at a loss how to characterise such a statement, taken simply as an exhibition of carelessness. I have already quoted the passages in which Buckle declared his sense of the comparative inadequacy of his performance; and the reader knows that it is actually but a fragment—probably about two-thirds—of a projected introduction to a projected book. A critic who can so grossly misrepresent matters challenges our systematic distrust; and, indeed, Mr Fiske in this paper does not once deviate into the attitude of scrupulous critical candour. He

2. "*Thought, in its differentiating and integrating Activity, advances under Physical and Social Conditions, from the conception of One-sided Determination through the differentiation of Subjective and Objective to the conception of Mutual Determination.*"

3. "*In the general history of Civilisation the Sixth Century B.C. forms an epoch from which is to be dated a great Transitional Age in which, through various differentiations and antagonisms, the conception of Mutual, as distinguished from One-sided, Determination is wrought out in Philosophy, and the realisation of Mutual, as distinguished from One-sided, Determination is achieved in Polity.*"

Of these "principles" Mr Glennie has offered no historical demonstration other than is contained in the avowedly redacted dialogues in his *Pilgrim Memories*, and the arguments there are not such as to call for discussion here. The propositions themselves, in so far as they vary from Buckle's, seem to me either null or fantastic. "Mutual Determination" is only the doctrine of action and reaction in a verbally inflated form. The formula of a "fundamental Cause" indicates no Cause whatever, and the theorem that "Mutual Determination" in polity began in the 6th century B.C. may be dismissed in silence.

<sup>1</sup> P. 200.

seeks to gain his end by simple imputation, as thus:—"It is seldom that so brilliant a success as Mr Buckle's has been even temporarily achieved by such superficial thinking and such *slender scholarship*." That sentence being calculated to make even the enemies of Buckle rub their eyes, the critic proceeds to cover it as follows:—"The immense array of authors cited in his book bears witness to the *extent of his reading*, but the loose, indiscriminate way in which they are cited shows equally how uncritical and desultory (!) his reading was." I will not so extravagantly dissemble the relative standing of Buckle and Mr Fiske as to say that we have here a felicitous example of the typical case of Wolf and Lamb; but I am fain to linger over it as a specimen of criticism too determinedly biassed to avoid the worst pitfalls of absurdity. The reader will see that Mr Fiske had not even a distinct thought in his mind when he began his aspersion of "slender scholarship," and that he did but back up a wild charge with a semblance of explication no better bottomed in knowledge or reason. It is almost too much of complaisance to reply curtly that Buckle's whole mass of criticism of his authorities proves him to be one of the most sagacious students that ever lived; that his reading was coördinated to an admirable degree; that his citation of authorities is as a rule rigorously to the point; and that the mock-inference as to the desultoriness of his reading is beneath discussion. But it is worth while to pause over the piece of mock-analysis with which Mr Fiske follows up these dicta:—

"One reason why the scholarship of university bred men is in the main so far superior to that of men who have been taught at home is that the former are regularly forced, by continual contact and rivalry with fellow-students, into habits of self-restraint and self-criticism in reaching conclusions which only the rarest innate virtues of intellect can enable the latter now and then, in spite of their solitude, to acquire. It is but once or twice in an age that the home-taught student can receive the stimulus (*sic*) to patient sagacity that was afforded in the case of Grote and Mill. The kind of unceasing criticism which university life affords the best means of securing, is in most cases indispensable."

In this statement, or rather under it, there is unquestionably a measure of truth. The main value of a university training is the mutual criticism of equals. But, put as Mr Fiske puts it, with his invidious purpose, the proposition only serves to turn his own flank. The two most considerable histories of antiquity hitherto produced in England are Gibbon's and Grote's; and not only was Grote, as Mr Fiske notes, not a university man, but Gibbon has left on record the most damning indictment ever brought against a university by one who attended it, he declaring that all he ever did was done without the slightest help or stimulus from his university career, which only tended to demoralise him. Next to Gibbon's in order of importance among English histories, some critics (before Grote) have put James Mill's *History of India*; and that was about as little inspired or bettered by university training as was Gibbon's. Next after Grote's work comes that of Finlay, equally non-academic, equally influential. As for later performances, let the competent reader pronounce on the exactitude of the scholarship of Mr Froude, whose "*Cæsar*" has been declared one of the most inaccurate works ever written by a historian of distinction. Let him next pronounce on the precision of the scholarship of Mr Green, whose "*Short History*" on its appearance was found riddled with errors, and was left riddled with crudities and inconsistencies of doctrine; or on the philosophic profundity which underlies the detail-accuracy of Dr Freeman.<sup>1</sup> Let the student then inquire how many really masterly historical or scientific performances have come from the English universities within the past hundred years, counting backwards, say, from Bishop Stubbs. And still the investigation is but begun. John Mill has been alluded to; but it did not occur to Mr Fiske to mention Lewes and Spencer, or Tyndall and Huxley. How much have the universities produced as against these specimens of the scholarship of "solitude"—save the mark! And to what

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Thorold Rogers (*On the Economic Interpretation of History*, p. 3), as to the small use made by Freeman of the *Domesday Book*.

credit are the universities entitled in the case of Darwin? Malice is apt to be short-sighted; and Mr Fiske has not been prudent in prompting an inquiry which reveals that a great deal of the most original and important research and thinking done in England for generations has been achieved by men who either never attended a university or got next to nothing from such attendance. He forgets that in the nature of the case it is the mediocre men who gain most from the university life, that the strong men can at best gain little. Carlyle declared that his university simply taught him to read in several languages. Buckle knew twice as many languages as Carlyle.<sup>1</sup> And the academic Hallam, one of whose works Carlyle pronounced a "puir skeleton o' a book," has been found out in at least as many inaccuracies as Carlyle, and is now being slighted by experts, with probably not half his grasp and power, for his inability to read charters. Nay, Mr Froude, specially moved to circumspection, has exposed a series of blunders in the academic Macaulay; and I am not aware that anybody has yet done an equivalent service for Buckle. As for the accuracy of Professor Fiske, with his prolonged university connection—well, that particular comparison would indeed tend to become odorous.

So much for the generalisation with which Mr Fiske professes to enforce his otherwise unsupported imputation on Buckle's scholarship. There is really nothing more in his "postscript" to analyse—nothing but unmeasured and unjustified—I am inclined to say indecent—detraction. "Not only," we are told (p. 198), "did Mr Buckle's impatient and uncritical habit<sup>2</sup> prevent his vast reading from

<sup>1</sup> In 1850 he knew nineteen languages. French, German, Spanish, Italian, and Portuguese he knew well, speaking and writing them with facility. Thirteen o'hers, including Latin and Greek, he read competently. See Mr Huth's *Life*. The amount of "impatience" required to accomplish these things may be readily estimated.

<sup>2</sup> Compare with this imputation the account given by Mr Huth of Buckle's actual manner of study (*Life*, i. 37-38). Mr Fiske has a singularly reckless statement (p. 197) as to Buckle's "native impatience of temperament, illustrated in his disposing of Gibbon and Hallam in ten days." I am not sure

resulting in sound scholarship, but his lack of subtlety and precision were so marked as to stamp all his thinking with the character of shallowness. He seized readily upon the broader and vaguer distinctions among things, the force of which the ordinary reader feels most strongly and with least mental effort; and so on, and so on. We have seen something of Mr Fiske's precision and critical habit; we may estimate his subtlety from his discovery that Dr Freeman is a "great historian, whose opinions are determined everywhere by the sociological study of institutions"; that he is much superior to Carlyle; that "of all the

where he got this item, but I find in Mr Huth's *Life* (i. 21-22) Buckle's own account, taken from his journal, of how he read Gibbon and others on the *medieval period* at the time when he contemplated a History of the Middle Ages:—"So that, I think, on an average I may say eight days will suffice in future for *each history*"—i.e., of the *medieval period* only. "It is my intention," he goes on "*to go first in this hasty and superficial way through European History of the Middle Ages, and then, reading the more elaborate works, make myself as much a master of the subject as is possible.*" One must know Mr Fiske's authority for his statement before one decides quite *how* much discredit is due to his vending of it. In this connection I ought perhaps to notice the unfortunate comment passed by Miss Helen Taylor (Memoir prefaced to Buckle's *Miscellaneous Works*, p. 14), on the words "more elaborate" above quoted. "He cannot have failed," says Miss Taylor, "very soon to find out that few or no more elaborate works than those of Gibbon and Hallam exist in any literature (!), and accordingly it is precisely these and works of the same description to which he ultimately was content to refer in his own book." Of course, as Mr Huth gently suggests (*Life*, i. 22), the "more elaborate works" included the authorities *used by* the historians named, but they also meant yet other authorities. If Miss Taylor will turn over Buckle's sixth chapter, which deals with the state of historical literature during the Middle Ages, she will find, I think, no reference to Gibbon, and hardly more than one to Hallam, but, among hundreds of others, references to the Benedictine *Histoire Littéraire de la France*, Monteil, Montucla, Mallet, Warton, Villemarqué, Talvi, Lappenberg, Maury, Neander, Mosheim, Llorente, Palgrave, Kemble, Renouard, Sprengel, Prichard, Le Long, Van Kampen, Mezeray, Wright, Mills, Hecker, Sismondi, Peignot, Ticknor, Sharon Turner, Madden, Bayle, and Delambre, almost all of whom make some special research in the Middle Ages; and citations of Comines, De Thou, Polydore Vergil, Turpin, Froissart, Matthew of Westminster, Geoffrey of Monmouth, William of Malmesbury, Matthew Paris, Roger of Hoveden, Layamon, and other writers rather nearer the Middle Ages, and more copious on some of the affairs thereof than Gibbon and Hallam. And if Miss Taylor wants to get an "elaborate" knowledge of that period she had better follow Buckle's lead.

historians now living [Mr Fiske has read them all] Mr Freeman is the most thoroughly filled with the scientific spirit"; and that—let the academic note the construction of the sentence—"he has done more than any other to raise the study of history on to a higher level than it has ever before occupied."<sup>1</sup>

It will be observed that whereas Mr Fiske finds Buckle's scholarship loose and desultory, the equally hostile Mr Stephen thought he had arranged immense stores of knowledge in luminous order and applied it to the illustration of great principles. Such deliverances might be left to their mutual extinction; and of course it is needless to weigh against each other the opinion of the ripe Professor and the concession of the immature Mr Fiske<sup>2</sup> that Buckle's "inquiry into the history of the intellect in England, France, Spain, and Scotland shows an extent of learning and a depth of thought unsurpassed, *so far as we know* [at nineteen], in historical literature." In their different ways, these judgments are perhaps about equally valuable. But as I am anxious to meet mere aspersion with something more decisive, I would ask the reader to bear with a few words more on the manner in which Mr Fiske so economically discredits the writer he assails.

Avoiding any real criticism, Mr Fiske asks us to contrast the *Introduction* with "some of the really great books which were contemporary with it, such as Mr Darwin's *Origin of Species*, Mr Spencer's *Principles of Psychology*, or Sir Henry Maine's *Ancient Law*," and to note how much more these have influenced thought. The comparison, invidiously designed, only serves once more to vindicate Buckle and discredit his assailant. To begin with, each of the three writers cited lived to develop his researches and strengthen his status with fresh works; yet not a tittle of allowance is made by the critic for that advantage, which he does not so much as

<sup>1</sup> Article, "Sociology and Hero-Worship," *Atlantic Monthly*, Jan. 1881, pp. 83-4.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. cited, p. 189.



mention. But, further, whereas Mr Fiske accuses Buckle of inability to reach generalisations that are "subtle and precise,"<sup>1</sup> and by implication credits the others with such ability, it is obvious to every student that not only did Darwin make no "subtle and precise" generalisation, evading as he did the problem of tendency to variation, but he drew his main generalisation from Malthus; that his actual service was by the careful colligation of facts to give a new cogency to a principle already enunciated; and that the rapid spread of his views is precisely due to the breadth and simplicity of his argument. And where is the subtlety of precision in the teaching of Sir Henry Maine, even were it not so largely discredited by subsequent research? Really, a publicist who pretends that subtle generalisations, suddenly made, ever conquer the world in a generation, does but show that he does not know what subtlety is. I should be sorry to seem to make light of the immense services rendered to this generation by Mr Spencer; but I fancy I shall have adequate expert support when I say that Mr Fiske's assertion<sup>2</sup> as to the "time-honoured contest represented by Locke and Leibnitz, Hume and Kant," taking a "new point of departure owing to Mr Spencer's suggestion of the acquirement of mental faculties through inheritance and slow variation"—that this vaguely impressive suggestion does but suggest exaggerated notions of the fact. The philosophically important part of the datum was already possessed in the admitted gradual extension of faculty in the individual, and this, surely, Kant had fully seen before Spencer, whether or not he reasoned soundly from it.

Let us come, however, to the central point. *Has Buckle,*

<sup>1</sup> It should be observed that Buckle not only saw but insisted on the general character of his conclusions. "The real objection, therefore," he writes, "to generalisations respecting the development of the intellect of a nation is, *not that they want certainty, but that they lack precision*. That is just the point at which the historian diverges from the annalist" (ii. 325). Compare the whole passage, which is *à propos* of the proximate causes of the French Revolution, and the footnote with citation from Comte.

<sup>2</sup> P. 200.

or has he not, practically influenced modern thinking? I submit to the candid enquirer that he has, to an incalculable extent—incalculable, because the bearing of his work is so much more on the complex problems of social conduct than on the distant questions of biology and primitive human life. On the former matters Mr Fiske inclines apparently to the Nihilism of Mr Spencer; and in that case Buckle would have little message for him; but, though Buckle was himself something of a Manchester politician, he has in reality supplied a basis and a guide for modern sociological thought such as is supplied neither by Mr Spencer, lamed by his Nihilism, nor by Comte, flawed by his egotistic credulity—not to speak of the prejudiced Maine and the incurably superficial Freeman. I am even inclined to say that he has done about as much to make the history of civilisation intelligible as Darwin did to make intelligible the analogous problem of the development of species—taking Darwin's work, that is, separately from that of his predecessors and his successors. Just because the actual conscious reconstruction of society is such an immensely more complex matter than the mere formulation of primary biological law, it is indeed impossible to point to any such explicit endorsement of Buckle by the one or two comprehensive sociologists as is given to Darwin by the many incomprehensive naturalists. But Buckle's restoration to just honour, I fancy, is coming; and there are plain signs that Darwin's limitations will be more obvious to posterity than they are to the generation he has dazzled by his unquestionably great performance. And in that case, Buckle's Darwinian detractors, with their numerous works, may in comparison make a rather poor figure.

Enough, perhaps, of Mr Fiske; but the whetted critical taste tends still to loiter over such a sample of sequent reflection as the following:—

“But”—let the syntax this time be noted—“in marked *contrast* with *works* of this kind” [*i.e.*, of the *three* kinds before-mentioned], “we find in Mr Buckle's book sundry *commonplace reflections* of quite

limited value or applicability. . . . No doubt *such commonplaces* might be *so treated as to acquire the practical value of new contributions* to history. But to treat them so requires *subtle analysis of the facts generalised*, and all that Mr Buckle did was to *collect miscellaneous evidences for the statements in their rough and ready form.*"

If this tissue of confused disparagement is to pass current for rational criticism, Buckle may well fall into disrepute, and the present defence of him is indeed labour lost. But one is fain to hope that even the unsubtle populace will not be permanently impressed by such detraction, or by the sort of judicial principle which, after belittling Buckle for telling the truth, proceeds to exalt Comte by comparison as having gone "*below the surface of things*" in his "*suggestive though indefensible Law of the Three Stages.*" And, while it would be no answer to a specific argument to say that the man who advances it is badly prepared in his subject, it may not be idle to suggest how striking is the contrast between Buckle's seventeen years of laborious and comprehensive preparation and the hand-to-mouth practice of the writer who presumes to speak of his "impatient and uncritical habit," and who has been engaged in supplying the world with unoriginal instruction from the age of nineteen. That practice, one suspects, points to one of the reasons why such questions as are handled by Buckle, and matters of literary criticism generally, move so much more slowly towards settlement than problems in physical science. There is a large and continuous public consumption of essays and reviews on literary and "general" topics, and there accordingly exists a class whose business is to produce "articles" as rival traders produce articles of commerce, not merely to meet a demand, but to keep up a routine and make a living. Every journalist knows the attitude. You write to live, and instead of saying something because you are impelled to say it, you must needs cast about, like the preacher, for something to speak upon. In physical science this drawback has hitherto existed only in a small degree: in that department there have

been thus far, naturally, not nearly so many ready-writers; and in any case the public demand for miscellaneous science is not so extensive as the demand for "general" articles. Then the practical men of science are to a large extent pecuniarily endowed, and to conquer the attention of these the scientific publicist must do practical work; mere amateur criticism soon finding its level so far as they are concerned. But as regards sociology, there is virtually no corresponding practical class. The great endowed body of clergy, which should theoretically deal with human science, is specifically anti-scientific; so that the criticism of a well-equipped social-scientist like Buckle is left with the ready-writers, who turn out essays like Mr Stephen's and reviews like Professor Fiske's; and the public which reads, the clergy-led public which Buckle sought to enlighten, is the public which has bought some hundred thousand copies of "Natural Law in the Spiritual World," and thinks it is there reading philosophy and science.

I hesitate to say how different is the total impression made on me by Buckle from that made by almost all the writers who affect to condemn him: how complete and how well-ordered is his knowledge, how original his thinking, how masculine his industry, as compared with theirs; how far he transcends them in reach and grip; how inconsiderable, after all, are even the obvious faults that are a drawback to his performance, as beside the faults which are the essential qualities of theirs. Doubtless one runs a real risk of over-estimating him, just by making such comparisons.

§ 2. MR G. A. SIMCOX'S: *Academic Accuracy.*

There appears, indeed, to be something demoralising in the function of criticism as it is commonly fulfilled—something in the business of current literary judgment that tends to make men lose sight of any ideal of judicial modesty or scrupulous fairness. One of the latest flings

at Buckle, for instance, is contained in Mr G. A. Simcox's review of Mark Pattison's literary remains in the *Academy* (March 9, 1889); and I doubt whether any newspaper criticism ever penned could be more censurable than that in respect of levity and looseness. I transcribe the aspersions :—

"There is a curious contrast between Mark Pattison's treatment of Warburton and his treatment of Buckle. If Gibbon called Warburton learned it was by way of irony; but Buckle is called learned by Mr Pattison himself, in an essay where some most amazing remarks about a certain King 'Gudisthes' and another King 'Alaska' are quoted at length" [names *sic* in *Academy*]. "'Gudisthes,' one guesses, must be the blameless King of the *Mahabharata*, but who is 'Alaska'?" Buckle's reading, though vast and carefully tabulated, was as undisciplined as Warburton's. Both were self-taught, both had collected huge masses of second-hand knowledge: neither was in a position to follow its latest developments."

To deal with the smaller issues first, let us notice the fashion in which Mr Simcox treats facts.

The passage quoted from Buckle by Pattison, as reprinted in the latter's "Essays" [ii. 409], gives the names not as "Gudisthes" and "Alaska," but as "Gud-hishther" and "Alarka." In point of fact, Buckle wrote "Yudhishthir,"<sup>1</sup> but Pattison either copied carelessly or checked his proofs loosely, there being in this paragraph the further blunder of a 4 for a 6. Whereas, however, Pattison went wrong with one name only, Mr Simcox, in the very act of wondering whose the names cited can be, is so grossly careless as further to alter one name almost beyond recognition, and yet again to alter "Alarka" to "Alaska." "Alaska," he may be informed, originates solely in his own slatternly clerical practice; and there seems no other explanation of his feat of transcribing the letters "Gudisthes" from Pattison's page. Such things might in an ordinary case be passed with a shrug of the shoulders; but what are we to say of a professed scholar who founds his sneers at another on the products of his own slovenliness? A scholar, one sup-

<sup>1</sup> I. 136.

poses, would turn, if perplexed by Pattison's mistranscription, to Buckle's book, the reference being given. Mr Simcox, instead of doing that, distorts Pattison three times more carelessly than Pattison had done Buckle; and then casts an impertinence at the blunder Buckle did not make. The latter, I need hardly add, gives precise references for his "amazing remarks," which are simply matter-of-fact recapitulations of Hindu extravagances about the longevity of the kings mentioned. Concerning Alarka, Mr Simcox may read in the Vishnu Purāna.

Mr Simcox, we can see, entertains the pleasing conviction, somewhat common among university men, that his training has given him habits of scholarly accuracy and intellectual precision such as cannot be attained by outsiders. We have had a sample of his practice in minor detail; and it is possible to suspect that his higher cerebral processes are not exempt from the infirmities of the lower. I will not argue long over his parallel between Buckle and Warburton.<sup>1</sup> He holds that the argument of the "Divine Legation," which Pattison, in common with most moderns, considered preposterous, was "really ingenious and important"; and he adds:—"Since Warburton wrote, the ancient religion of India has been brought to light, and the discovery tells in his favour. Buddha seems to have wished to dispense with heaven: even he did not attempt to dispense with hell." That is to say, the supposed policy of Buddha supports Warburton's theory that Moses purposely, and by inspiration, kept heaven out of his doctrine while convinced that heaven existed. I cannot doubt that Mr Simcox has read the "Divine Legation": the resultant "Gudisthes" from his simpler studies prepares one for seeing rapid transitions in his idea of a given argument: and I am not surprised that a scholar who has no misgivings about the personality of Buddha should think Warburton's knowledge similar in nature and amount to Buckle's. I will take leave to assume that the majority of educated readers will take

<sup>1</sup> This was probably suggested by Macaulay. See above, p. 26.

a different view from Mr Simcox's of Warburton's "importance and erudition." But it may be desirable to pause a little over the question as to Buckle's "second-hand knowledge," and inability to "follow its latest developments."

Mr Simcox himself ranks in contemporary letters as the author of a History of Latin Literature. Of the faults of that work I will not here speak, beyond saying that it would in itself serve to prove his inability to appreciate Buckle. As he himself admits in his preface, "it is a confession of defeat to despair of organic unity, and fall back upon a sort of comparative portrait-gallery, or rather perhaps one should say a series of sketches."<sup>1</sup> Such in reality is his performance, which is as devoid of philosophic breadth or insight as of ease or finish of style. The question here, however, is not of Mr Simcox's philosophic grasp, but of his theory of knowledge. His book indicates him to have read a good deal of old Latin poetry, history, and philosophy; and from his remarks on Buckle and Warburton it may be concluded that in his opinion the knowledge on which he based his own treatise is correctly to be described as "first-hand," while a "vast" knowledge of history and general science, such as Buckle's, is second-hand, in respect that it is mostly derived from books which profess to tell facts about nature and human experience and development. I am fain to say that if this sort of judgment were the normal outcome of university training, the value of that would no longer be questionable. Mr Simcox fondly supposes that a knowledge of one ancient literature is an attainment somehow superior to the knowledge either of modern literatures or of the general results of all modern investigation of nature and history. Buckle, in all probability, had a wider knowledge of modern *belles lettres* than Mr Simcox, being a great lover of all branches of the literature of imagination, and a master of many languages. Of the literature of ancient Greece and Rome his knowledge would seem to have been

<sup>1</sup> Work cited, pref., p. xi.

considerable, though naturally he had read less Latin than Mr Simcox. But in any case he would probably have described as the most important part of his "knowledge," not his acquaintance with *belles lettres*, commonly so called, but his grasp of the multitudinous facts of human history and human conditions. On these points he got his knowledge mainly by study of the writings of men of science, historians, travellers, and economists. If this is to be called second-hand knowledge, it will be advisable first to show that there is a different and first-hand method of acquiring similarly extensive knowledge on the same subjects. If there is any precise meaning in Mr Simcox's words at all<sup>1</sup>—a point not quite clear—it would seem necessarily to be this, that to know a limited literature *qua* literature, or to learn the facts of a science or the habits of a people by personal investigation, is a higher order of research than any labour of sociology, any historic study, or any coördination of scientific results. That is to say, Mr

<sup>1</sup> His "second-hand" was probably suggested to him by the words of Miss Taylor in her memoir of Buckle (*Misc. Works*, p. xv.):—"There is little trace of his [Buckle's] ever having exercised his mind much on facts at first hand: people, things and events, society, nature, art, science, and even politics seem to have had their main interest for him after they had been chronicled, and even grouped for him, by other minds. He evidently preferred to use his original powers of thought on the materials that had been amassed by other thinkers." The spectacle of Mr Simcox and others forbids me to suggest that Buckle's feminine critics are specially "hard to please"; but one would really like to know what Miss Taylor supposed she meant by a historic "fact at first hand." Events "*before* they have been chronicled" are commonly understood to be in the hands of the police and the reporters; and bygone events of that order do not seem exactly easy to find, even for original minds. Most of us, it is to be feared, find the "main interest" of facts as to nature, and art, and politics, and society accrue after we have heard about them! Even Mr Simcox must turn his attention to the chroniclers and groupers before he can perform his triumphs of originality as a historian. Must we just decide that Miss Taylor was creating a too original "bull" when she pronounced on the want of originality in Buckle? We have seen above (p. 106) another of the critical reflections with which she adorned her memoir of her subject. She has hardly been fortunate in her originalities. If she wanted to convey the fact that Buckle undertook the coördination of printed historical knowledge rather than excavations for inscriptions or searches for parchments, she might have done it without much difficulty. But we knew that already.



Simcox and M. Pasteur and Mr Stanley ought to take a more distinguished place (as of first-hand over second-hand students) than Comte, Spencer, and Guizot. I can extract no other thesis from Mr Simcox's words ; and I am content to leave it without comment.

For the rest, Mr Simcox cannot be excused on the score of journalistic haste. He was dealing with a matter which he had handled nine years before, on the publication of Mr Huth's "Life of Buckle." In a review of that work he took on the whole a more favourable view of Buckle's performance than he did in 1889, speaking of his book as a masterpiece,<sup>1</sup> and noting, among other things, how Buckle "had followed the scientific movement of his day, and observed with prophetic insight that the discussion of the transmutation of species was the weak point in Lyell's great work on geology."<sup>2</sup> Yet even in this critique Mr Simcox shows his incapacity for accuracy, academic or other. Disparaging a number of Buckle's generalisations, he writes :

"Nor can we explain the difference between the history of Spain and Scotland by observing that a bigoted clergy opposed the crown in Scotland and supported the crown in Spain ; or the difference between America and Germany by observing that the ablest minds of Germany devoted themselves to the deductive method and accumulation of knowledge, and the ablest minds of America to the inductive method and the diffusion of knowledge."<sup>3</sup>

This is the merest perversion of Buckle's propositions. He never said that the differences in question were "explained" in the way alleged ; he expressly posited the described difference between America and Germany as a datum to be explained.

It is after such criticism as this that Mr Simcox decides that the "masterpiece" after all counts for little. He notes that it was "received with instant acclamation by the public, and depreciated as far as possible by most of those

<sup>1</sup> Article on "Henry Thomas Buckle," *Fortnightly Review*, Feb. 1880, p. 270.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*, p. 276.

<sup>3</sup> *Id. ib.*

to whom the public generally looks for guidance";<sup>1</sup> and he thinks this hostility of the literary class was justified. "Their justification is complete when we remember that Buckle's method and generalisations have been quite unfruitful. Mr Darwin and Mr Herbert Spencer and Sir H. S. Maine have had followers. Buckle has had only readers."<sup>2</sup> We have seen to some extent how the literary and clerical class, including Mr Simcox, have sought to keep Buckle's teaching "unfruitful"; and we are enabled to estimate with some confidence the value of an abstention on their part from "following" it. Mr Simcox's inexpensive argument really amounts to this, that the literary class were justified in opposing Buckle's doctrine because they have continued to oppose or ignore it. Even on that unsophisticated view, however, it only needs that a few writers should declare Buckle's method and generalisations to be valuable in order that the tables should be turned. Thus Mr Simcox's final academic test of the validity of any scientific theory is the measure of expert acceptance it meets with in twenty years. So that had he lived late in the sixteenth or early in the seventeenth century he would have been able to make short work of Copernicus, as he would have done of Young's undulatory theory of light about 1820.<sup>3</sup> Yet even on his own method it is hard to see how he can dispose of the fact that M. Letourneau, while naming Buckle as one of the pioneers of sociology, confesses that Mr Spencer's "exposition of facts is singularly unmethodical, and he is often led astray by *a priori* conceptions," while further, "in many of his conclusions Mr Spencer has run directly counter to noticeable facts, and to those which have been already established."<sup>4</sup> It does not appear that M. Letourneau has found Mr Spencer's sociological method "fruitful." Neither does

<sup>1</sup> Article on "Henry Thomas Buckle," *Fortnightly Review*, Feb. 1880, p. 270.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*, p. 277.

<sup>3</sup> See Whewell's *History of the Inductive Sciences*, 3rd ed., ii. 349.

<sup>4</sup> *Sociology*, Eng. tr., *preface*.

Mr M'Lennan seem to have found Sir Henry Maine's so. On the other hand, Stahl's doctrine of Phlogiston must still, by Mr Simcox's test, rank as "fruitful," since Stahl had certainly "followers."

If Mr Simcox's organon is not felt to have disposed of itself on these applications, it may suffice to say that there is plenty of time for Buckle's method to bear fruit; and that it need surprise nobody if a sociological method which not only upsets the explanatory lore of all religions and the interpretations of most historians, but also counters the most universal moral and racial prepossessions, should take a generation or even two to win its due credit at the hands of the literary class in general. Even as it is, M. Letourneau for one follows Charles Comte's and Buckle's lead at some important points;<sup>1</sup> and it is safe to say that sociological surveys which cover later periods of European civilisation than those he deals with will more largely profit by Buckle's work.

### § 3. MARK PATTISON'S. *Academic versus Academic.*

The value of the academic canon may be seen in a new light on applying it to Pattison. Pattison's special learning, different in its scope from Buckle's, consisted not in superior familiarity with the classics, though he was a good classic, but in multifarious knowledge of European intellectual history from the Renaissance. This knowledge, according to Mr Simcox's test, would be largely second-hand. Thus one of the few English university men of these days who was really learned to some good purpose would be put in a back row merely because his studies had not been mainly philological and belletristic. How much of his knowledge and capacity Pattison gained by reason of his university surroundings it would be interesting to

<sup>1</sup> As to early American civilisation, *L'Evolution Politique* (1890), p. 111; as to beginnings of civilisation in general, *Sociology*, Eng. tr., p. 16. I may be permitted to say, with respect, that M. Letourneau might profitably have embodied other principles from Buckle in his *L'Evolution Politique*.

know. A certain amount of academic assumption, indeed, a certain hauteur of scholarship,<sup>1</sup> runs through all his books, though he was capable of disgracefully mangling a familiar quotation from Goethe,<sup>2</sup> university scholarship not being particular in all directions. But he was incapable of the folly of belittling the toil and the endowment of a student who had done his work elsewhere than in a university; Pattison having indeed but a moderate esteem for universities as he knew them. In revenge we find Mr Simcox, who has escaped being self-taught, and who has stuck hard to his classics, putting Pattison little higher than Buckle in respect of trustworthiness on many points. "Wherever he turns, the spectre of the Catholic re-action makes his way dark and slippery." He is "one-sided," often "unjust." "The essay on Buckle, which was written in 1857, is extremely able and distinctly crude. Buckle's ineffectual pretention to substitute a series of *deductions from social science (sic)* for ordinary history is exposed with quiet mastery; but his caricature of the 'sceptical theory of arbitrary interposition,' which is quite incompatible with the orthodox doctrine of the Divine Eternity, is accepted as if neither St Augustine nor Babbage had written." With Pattison's criticism of Buckle, which is worth examining, I will deal separately. As Mr Simcox's theology is at one with that of St Augustine and Babbage, the reader can settle the problem of divine interposition by study of these philosophers at his leisure.<sup>3</sup>

Pattison, at the outset of his review, which deals only with the first volume, pays tribute to Buckle's knowledge. The book, he says, differing extensively from Mr Simcox and Mr Fiske, "is learned in the only true sense of the word. A mere glance at the matter accumulated in the notes will show the labour and reading which it has cost to quarry the materials. These are as judiciously selected

<sup>1</sup> See his *Milton*, p. 41.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*, p. 183.

<sup>3</sup> I may mention that he will find the question of the compatibility of the different Augustinian doctrines duly noticed by Buckle in his first chapter (i. 13).

as they have been widely sought, and make the volume, besides its proper merits, a most instructive repertory of facts." What Pattison meant by "learned in the only true sense" may be gathered from his remark that Warburton was unlearned because his temper was "too arrogant to 'learn,' too impatient to inquire"—a view of learning which would evidently clash with Mr Simcox's. The objections to Buckle's work, however, are as explicit as the eulogy. Less than an objection, perhaps, is the surprise expressed at Buckle's treatment of the fallacious belief in the positive influence of Governments. "This fallacy, for it is nothing more, is one we should have thought Mr Buckle would have expatiated in refuting. But he only brings forward some of the more obvious illustrations of the principle, that the government of any country whatsoever always follows, never leads." In any case, the cavil is somewhat hasty. Buckle's proposition (which is finally put in the modified form that the beneficent influence of governments is negative, not positive) though only generally stated in the passage which Pattison had under notice, is sufficiently elaborated in the subsequent treatment of French and Spanish history. It was rather premature to treat the first volume as exhausting the propositions it contained. More fundamental is the following protest:—

"Mr Buckle has not overlooked *race*, but has deliberately excluded it. This arbitrary exclusion of so important an influence on the formation of character is an instance, in the outset, of that determination to purchase symmetry at the cost of completeness, which we notice throughout the Introduction. When we can leave out what we don't like, we can demonstrate most things."<sup>1</sup>

On this it may be conceded, to begin with, that a complete sociology must deal with race, which, however, it will not treat as an "influence on the formation of character," in Pattison's crude phrase, but as a manifestation or species of character. But, granting this, does it follow that blame is due to a writer who, sketching the history of civilisation,

*Essays, as cited.*

aims at setting forth the social causes which are at all times operating to *constitute* racial peculiarities, but avoids estimating the ultimate reactions on conduct of peculiarities so acquired? Surely not. The problem of these reactions is the most obscure and baffling in all sociology, though it is the one on which there has been most of dogmatising.<sup>1</sup> The ground is cumbered with these masses of worthless empiricism; and Buckle really took, to my thinking, a wise course in refusing to complicate his demonstrations, which he believed trustworthy so far as they went, with a process of speculation on a matter on which he could see no way to a scientific foothold. It was not that he "left out what he didn't like" in order to have a freer hand for theorising: that is an unfair insinuation. He really did much to explain "race"—that is, to show how certain national peculiarities have arisen; and nothing would have been easier for him than to fall back on a generalisation about race when his argument from natural and intellectual influences needed eking out, or did not at first sight work easily. But he rigorously confined himself to what seemed to him solid ground, leaving formulas about race to the sociological sciolist, whose stock-in-trade, as Pattison might have remembered, they commonly are.

Still more emphatic, but not, I think, more conclusive, is Pattison's general criticism of Buckle's method—which is, I suppose, the passage Mr Simcox praises as exposing Buckle's ineffectual pretension with quiet mastery:—

"The inference that the actions of individuals afford no materials for science, disqualifies at one stroke all the records of past events which have hitherto been preserved. We cannot found on them anything more than conjectural inference as to the state of society. A social history can only be composed upon statistical *data*. And as those *data*—even if they were real generalisations, which they are not,—extend only to a very small number of social phenomena, it will follow that a history of society, in the present state of knowledge, is an impossibility. If this be so, what are we to think of Mr Buckle's 850 pages? From what materials are they drawn? On what *data* are they founded? Will it be believed that after laying down, in the

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<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 96.

outset, that individual experiments can effect nothing, and that certain consequences can only be tracked by comprehensive observation of society in the aggregate; that after pouring unmeasured contempt on previous historians for neglecting this principle, and on the metaphysicians for their narrow method of studying the human mind in single specimens, and that after insisting that we must apply to the history of man those methods of investigation which have been found successful in other branches of knowledge, Mr Buckle employs the remainder of his volume in *exemplifying the very method of writing history which he had condemned?* We have in several chapters (chap. viii.-xiv.) a summary of the progress of society in France; a masterly sketch, of which it is not too much to say, that in breadth and comprehensiveness of view, no English writer on French History has yet equalled it. If the details are not new,—and they could not be,—*the whole effect is new.* If the principles are not original, they are brought to bear on the facts with a precision which lightens up every corner of the subject, and endows with a general purpose traits which have hitherto served to illustrate only a solitary character. But all this is effected without the slightest reference to the principles of historical science avowed in the opening. In the beginning of the volume, we have the author true to the principles of Positive Science. In his own practice, we find him sailing triumphantly down the broad stream of a deductive process. The revolutionary theory, with which he starts in life, is silently exchanged for a conformity with established practice. Instead of general averages, we have the opinions of eminent individuals. Instead of the fatality of social law, we have the force exerted on national life by the single will of a Louis XIV. The reader finds, indeed, his account in this forgetfulness of his own principles by the author. We find his history practical, entertaining, instructive, in a degree beyond that of most writers who have gone over the same ground; but by his own definition of History, it is excluded from any claim to that title. It bears the same relation to the science of History, which a narrative of the great house of Hope, or the successes and reverses of the family of Rothschild, would bear to the science of Political Economy.”

This is not at bottom ungenerous criticism, but is it valid? The corollary or inference with which it set out, to begin with, was not Buckle’s doctrine. On the face of them, indeed, his dicta in that regard are somewhat inconsistent: in his first chapter he declares that though our acquaintance with history is very imperfect, the “materials” are very numerous<sup>1</sup>; while in the fifth chapter he puts it that “the important facts have been neglected, and the

<sup>1</sup> I. 1-5.

unimportant ones preserved. The consequence is that whoever now attempts to generalise historical phenomena must collect the facts, as well as conduct the generalisation." But at bottom the meaning is the same; that modern historians have not collected the important facts from the mass of records of all times and countries. What then does he mean by the important facts? Simply comprehensive data as to the conditions of peoples in different respects at different times—"statistical" data if you will, but not necessarily statistical in the most rigid sense. "So small and insignificant," says Pattison, "compared with the whole social area, has been the area from which our statistics have been drawn, that we are not justified in regarding any result yet obtained as more than approximative." Well, be it so; what then is the connection between that premiss and the attack on Buckle? The historian admitted the difficulty of collecting the data: he was to do his best with his material; but finding the task of generalising all the facts too stupendous, he "reluctantly determined to write the history, not of general civilisation, but of the civilisation of a single people. While, however, by this means, we curtail the field of inquiry, we unfortunately diminish the resources of which the inquiry is possessed. For although it is perfectly true that the totality of human actions, if considered in long periods, depends on the totality of human knowledge, it must be allowed that this great principle, when applied only to one country, loses something of its original value. The more we diminish our observations, the greater becomes the uncertainty of the average: in other words, the greater the chance of the operation of the larger laws being troubled by the operation of the smaller."<sup>1</sup> What then was Buckle to do; and what did he pretend to do? Simply to colligate certain classes of facts as to human conditions in different countries, and, framing a hypothesis from the broad suggestion of the facts, *as does every scientific innovator*, to check that hypothesis in detail, and, finding it.

<sup>1</sup> I. 230-231.



then square with the facts, expound it. There *is* no other way of explanatorily generalising facts, however copious be the collection; and when Pattison resorts to rhetoric about "sailing down the broad stream of a deductive process" he is merely burking the logical issue. The rest of the contention escapes any suspicion of evasiveness by becoming suicidally confused.

If Buckle was only "exemplifying the very method of writing history which he had condemned," how comes it that "the whole effect is new"? What *was* the method he had condemned? Why, the method of court gossip, of filling books "with the most trifling and miserable details: personal anecdotes of kings and courts; interminable relations of what was said by one minister, and what was thought by another; and, what is worse than all, long accounts of campaigns, battles, and sieges . . . to us utterly useless, because they neither furnish new truths, nor do they supply the means by which new truths may be discovered."<sup>1</sup> He did not blame the historians for resorting to "deductive processes" to explain history, but for harbouring at most only a primeval deductive process unsuggested by general facts, and unchecked by such facts for the best of all reasons—that such facts were excluded from the narrative. Now, Buckle's method is fundamentally different, as it obviously must be to make his "whole effect" new. He does, as Pattison rather cumbrously puts it, "endow with a general purpose traits which have hitherto served to illustrate only a solitary character." That being so, it is mere counter-sense to say that "instead of general averages, we have the opinions of eminent individuals. Instead of the fatality of social law we have the force exerted on national life by the single will of a Louis XIV." The latter cavil is at first sight cogent, but finally nugatory: it ignores Buckle's explicit account of his purpose:—"Inasmuch as France is the most civilised country in which the protective spirit is very powerful, we may trace the occult tendencies of that spirit among ourselves,

<sup>1</sup> I. 230.

by studying its obvious tendencies among our neighbours. *With this view, I shall give an account of French history, in order to illustrate the protective principle*, by showing the injury it has inflicted on a very able and enlightened people.”<sup>1</sup> Louis XIV. simply happened to be the monarch whose reign most fully gave effect to that principle, which was the expression not of his “single will,” but of a tendency variously present in all societies. To say that this special illustration of one social law or tendency from the history of one country is an infraction of the “principles of Positive Science” laid down by Buckle at his outset, and that it is further a step “in conformity with established practice” among historians, is surely very idle. Buckle’s “own definition of History” was that it should be a record of the reactions of mind and phenomena<sup>2</sup>—a definition inadequately phrased in so far as it did not distinctly posit the reactions of mind on mind, but one with which his whole work substantially squares, as it does with his conception of the method of science. The criticism of Pattison, in fine, breaks down. On a first reading, one calls it a piece of brilliant perversity: on closer study the brilliance to some extent disappears. The reasoning, though adroit and striking, is hasty and incoherent, exactly exemplifying the normal influence of an English university training, which, as Pattison has himself protested, ignores or perverts the reasoning faculties in the interests of ecclesiasticism.<sup>3</sup>

A man is not a B.D. and Don of Oxford for nothing.

<sup>1</sup> I. 243.

<sup>2</sup> I. 20.

<sup>3</sup> “The feeble fabric of opinion in young Oxford, run up without labour and held without conviction, must give way before the steady pressure of the vast ecclesiastical organisation which, after having spread itself over the face of England, is now laying siege to our University as the stronghold of freedom of thought (!) and disengagement from the fetters of traditional dogma. The assault from without is aided by the reappearance within of an *a priori* philosophy, which, under various disguises, aims at exempting Man from the order of nature, and erecting him into a unique being whose organism is not to be subject to the uniform laws which govern all other Being that is known to us.” (*Memoirs*, p. 243. Cf. pp. 80, 83, 89, 90, 91, 93, 96-7, 101, 165, 166, 184, 185, 190-207, 237, 314, &c.)

Pattison's wide scholarship and instinctive rationalism could not wholly save him, even in the end, from the logical enfeeblement which the academic life around him went to produce.<sup>1</sup> And, naturally, it is when he reasons loosely and disconnectedly against a rationalist that his argumentation wins the approval of the academic Mr Simcox.

The *proximate* explanation of Pattison's inconsequence, however, I suspect to be his first perceiving the bearing of one abstract philosophical argument against Buckle's general claim, and then losing hold of his idea. He had previously well said<sup>2</sup> that "Mr Buckle rightly assumes, and does not attempt to prove, the principle" of Regularity. "No work on any single science ought to engage in the proof of the possibility of Science. That is a question of logic—and a very difficult one too, though not more so as applied to events than to physical phenomena." Now, the one valid criticism at all suggested by Pattison's later strictures is just that which raises the question of the possibility of Science. When all is said, what *are* Buckle's generalisations, and what are Darwin's? Simply explanations, adjusted to facts, which tend to satisfy the thinking faculties; as thus far developed, of a number of people who have acquired certain habits of mind. To these people those explanations are true, because at present they can perceive nothing as truth which would exclude them. But that their belief can set up for itself no necessary perpetuity of tenure was sufficiently proved long ago by Hume, and has been in a way proved over again in Mr Balfour's appendix to Hume, entitled "A Defence of Philosophic Doubt."<sup>3</sup> Mr Balfour contends that the belief in Regularity rests ultimately only on a mental tendency so to believe, and has thus no more absolute foundation than a

<sup>1</sup> In 1857 Pattison had certainly not worked out his complete life philosophy, but in his painfully fascinating *Memoirs* he indicates (p. 311) that he adhered to his general criticism of Buckle's theory.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. cited, p. 419.

<sup>3</sup> The same thesis is expounded in a more popular fashion in Mr Balfour's later work, "The Foundations of Religious Belief."

belief in religious mysteries. Quite so. The practical, the sufficient answer to Mr Balfour is that the course of things obviously makes for the former tendency, among educated men, more than for the latter, and that in non-religious matters he himself exhibits the tendency in the fullest degree. His canon turns out to be one of personal or partisan convenience, and is thus discredited for all sincere students. But while the philosophical truth may thus be dishonestly exploited, the truth remains. There *is*, finally, no objective truth that can be called absolute as distinguished from those admitted to be relative; and while we speak of certain scientific truths as secure, it remains the fact that men's mental relation to these truths tends to be modified from generation to generation, as new truths are glimpsed which correlate with or overlay them. When Darwinism is supplemented by a law of variation, the state of mind of the evolutionist will be altered; and if vaccination, say, is exploded, as resting on a *circulus in probando*, a state of quasi-scientific belief will be slowly and painfully changed to one of negation. Now, it is very likely indeed that some of Buckle's explanations will ere long be supplemented by others which in a sense will supersede them; and it is perfectly possible that some of his explanations may come to be generally regarded as fallacious. Therefore, he, like every innovator, is in a sense "bouncing" the general opinion when he proclaims that he has got truth, and that those before him had not. He cannot really know that any one scientific doctrine will not come in time to seem to men superficial or spurious in its explanation: he knows that the "positive" method is after all conclusive only relatively to him and to other methods: he knows that he has not grasped *all* the facts, and that therefore his generalisation is likely to be modified when more facts are known. In short, he ought to have said, as Mr Gardiner has since said: "I do not profess to tell how things happened, but only how they seem to me to have happened." He arranged them in a certain scheme of cause and effect; and the end of the

whole matter is the question, To how many people is that scheme plausible and acceptable? To Pattison, who had just been dwelling on the impermanence of all surveys of "that shifting quicksand called History," and who was about to set against Buckle's doctrine of the determining effect of knowledge an unsanguine picture of enlightenment at the mercy of ignorant force—to a man in such a frame of mind, the drift of Buckle's explanations of human affairs might well seem logically to amount to calling the chess-board white and not black. But, having excluded the veto of general scepticism while he was yet logically cool, he had not the right weapon to his hand, and hastily sought to show that Buckle was inconsistent with his own concrete assumptions or pretensions when he was in fact only verbally inconsistent with the ultimate positions of his philosophy—as Pattison himself must needs be in turn. The inconsistency was simply the (in propaganda) inevitable one of assuming the permanent certainty of a now sufficient explanation. Even to be wrong in your hypothesis is not to turn your back on positive science; and all that Pattison can finally urge against Buckle is that his hypothesis will not square with all the facts.

This final criticism, I confess, seems to me to resolve itself into a purely verbal dispute, and again to convict Pattison of want of logical circumspection, though his criticism is that of an independent thinker. It is, I submit, no real refutation of Buckle's claim to formulate a "law" of the governing effect of the totality of knowledge on the totality of actions—it is no negation of this to point, as does Pattison, to Buckle's generalisation that in tropical countries external Nature overrules man, while in Europe man overrules Nature. This is simply saying that in tropical countries man, unaided by extra-tropical civilisation, does not effectively accumulate knowledge, while in Europe, stimulated and not overwhelmed by Nature, he does. The totality of knowledge in India determines the totality of actions there all the same, though the effect of the environment there is to prevent the effective extension

of knowledge beyond a certain point. The two generalisations do not clash : they quadrate.

And when, finally, Pattison goes on to advance what he oddly calls "the rival theory, or *ordinary* view of European history" against Buckle's formula of total knowledge and total actions, the solution of the discord seems equally simple. He really attacks at the wrong angle. History proves, he asserts, the "weakness of intellect when separate from power and passion—its utter powerlessness when against them"; and the French Revolution he instances as a case of passion "*enlisted on the side of knowledge.*" What is happening in this argument is a shifting of the contents of terms. Clearly, when a few instructed people (for this is what Pattison means) are either out of touch with or opposed to the multitude of uninstructed, the "totality of knowledge" *does* determine action in the natural sense of Buckle's phrase. The knowledge of the mass, *such as it is, so far as it goes*, determines the action of the mass, which is the totality of action, minus the modifying action of the few. The meaning is not that the beliefs later seen to be sound make up the whole of "knowledge" in a given state of society, and that this subsequently-verified set of opinions determines the society's action. It is that the average of enlightenment, the extent to which the true opinions on history, society, and nature are or are not shared, will determine the generality of conduct—Buckle's point being to insist on the fallacy of the theory that for men to act rightly all that is necessary is that they should want to "do right." I will hereinafter attempt to show that Buckle's argumentation as to "moral feeling" and "knowledge" is in turn partly a process of confusing verbalism, and I confess that the phrase "totality of knowledge" seems to me an unfortunate one; but that does not alter the fact that Pattison's demurrer raises only a verbal issue. His view of society does not really clash with Buckle's. "The condition of every society yet known to us," he says,<sup>1</sup> "has been a small minority of educated

<sup>1</sup> Vol. cited, p. 430.

persons in a combination, either of conflict or harmony, with an overwhelming unenlightened mass. The enlightened minority who are in possession of the knowledge have more or less leavened the whole. . . . What security have we that the sleeping volcano of passion will not flame forth with irresistible violence? . . . Let selfish power step in, and in its own interest close the printing-presses, and where is knowledge? Shut up in the bosoms of a few silent worshippers, it dies a lingering death beneath the frown of power. It passes through all the stages of decay. Taste becomes pedantry, science becomes magic, Virgil is turned into an enchanter, and civilisation becomes the prolific mother of the thousand forms of barbarism." Eloquent and true, and perfectly in harmony with the doctrine of Buckle, who saw and said that selfish power, and even well-meaning power, could resist and oppress knowledge, and check its accumulation and diffusion, though he perhaps did not clearly enough point out that when power is able to do this, knowledge has already fallen short—knowledge, that is, of the value of freedom. Before Republican Rome could become Imperial, it had to be eviscerated of its ancient core and filled with a servile population, to whom the old convictions were figures of speech. The totality of knowledge, of ideas, determines how far power can oppress. True knowledge is not mere erudition, but the possession of salutary opinions as to life: it is one of Buckle's phrases that, at a particular time, "the French knew less because they believed more"<sup>1</sup> than the English. There the totality of knowledge—that is, the general degree of application of sound thought to life—did determine the totality of conduct. Persecution is common where intolerance is common; and selfish power will never be able to shut up the printing-presses save where its aims are widely shared in the society it governs. As to the question whether continuous intellectual progress is now assured, Buckle did not, I think, really commit himself, though his tone is of course much more optimistic than

<sup>1</sup> II. 104.

Pattison's. And yet it may be questioned whether a more broadly apprehensive view even than Pattison's is not that to which things point at present. The danger for Europe, or at least for England, is perhaps not so much of violent restriction of knowledge by selfish power as of the simple multiplication of ignorance by blind spread of population, with which spreads, wave for wave, that "ocean of imagination and false opinion" which Pattison heard sounding around him. An apparent extension of false opinion concurrently with the fuller acquisition of the knowledge which exposes the falsity of that opinion—this is a more disquieting phenomenon than any recent advances of selfish power. Happily the intellectual problem is bound up with the social, and we may take heart to assume that the need for solving the latter will be the solution of the former.

In that view, it is not a specific insurrection of "passion" that we have to guard against, but just the creation of a populace for which "education" has been rather a means of acquiring false ideas than an acquisition of true ones. The old distinction between "ideas" and "feelings," variously and self-contradictorily insisted on by Comte and Spencer, is not a truly psychological one, but in large part a mere jumble of definitions. Comte alternately allots the preponderance of influence to Emotion and to Ideas, calling Intellect at one time the servant and at another the regulator of Feeling;<sup>1</sup> Spencer insists that "the world is governed or overthrown by feelings, to which *ideas serve only as guides*"<sup>2</sup> (as if the guides were not thus admittedly the determining factors), and yet explains that "the most complex processes of reasoning are resolvable into intuitions of likeness and unlikeness between terms more or less involved"; that "the various divisions, therefore, which we ordinarily make among our mental operations, and which psychologists have mostly regarded as marking out distinct faculties, have merely a superficial

<sup>1</sup> See the *General View of Positivism*, Eng. trans., 2nd ed., pp. 9, 127, 165, 168, 240, and title-page.

<sup>2</sup> *Essays*, vol. iii., 3rd ed., p. 69.



truth"; and that "when regarded under its fundamental aspect, the highest reasoning is seen to be one with all the lower forms of human thought, and one with instinct and reflex action, even in their simplest manifestations."<sup>1</sup>

The psychologist reaches the truth which the controversialist missed. There is no fundamental difference between the rationale of conduct among the instructed and among the ignorant, "the so-called impulse of the people being at worst only a volition resulting from less evidence than the so-called reasoned opinions of the better-informed."<sup>2</sup> The "passion enlisted on the side of knowledge" is a passion which rests on the assimilation of some of the knowledge.

But if we are to stick to the old terminology, the doctrine of Spencer (which again only clashes with Comte in so far as Comte clashes with himself) will serve to vindicate Buckle. To say that ideas "serve as guides" to feelings is the same thing as to say that conduct is determined by knowledge; nay, Spencer goes on to employ Buckle's very term of "totality," objectionable as it is. "All social phenomena are produced by the totality of human emotions and beliefs"—a proposition which is necessarily qualified by the preceding one as to the ideas being the "guides." The further dictum that "the emotions are mainly pre-determined, while the beliefs are mainly post-determined,"<sup>3</sup> is, I submit, meaningless.

For the rest, it is needless to discuss at length Pattison's objection to Buckle's view that English thought greatly influenced French in the eighteenth century. The suggestion that "the *Anglomanie* of Voltaire's youth was an exterior symptom—at best a sympathy, and not a discipleship" is hardly intelligible in view of the facts; and there is a curious self-contradiction in Pattison's own account of the order of development. The philosophical and religious

<sup>1</sup> *Principles of Psychology*, 3rd ed., ii. 291-299.

<sup>2</sup> I quote words of my own, from a paper in which I once sought to analyse the question of "Ideas *versus* Feelings," *National Reformer*, April 19 and 26, 1885.

<sup>3</sup> *Essays*, as cited.

literature of England for the earlier half of the eighteenth century, he says,<sup>1</sup> has a "second-hand and derivative character. The writings of the English Deists . . . have that sort of originality which proceeds from ignorance of what has been thought or written. The speculative impulse came from the Continent ; from two or three leading minds—from Descartes, Spinoza, and Bayle. In England it [the impulse?] obtained notoriety, publicity, and diffusion." If the Deists were ignorant of what had been written, how could they have got their inspiration from foreign writers ? But the question raised is not vital. Pattison virtually concedes that the sceptical spirit became viable, practical, popular, in England, and puts it that Frenchmen "saw in us, with admiration and surprise, not the novelty of our ideas but our power of expressing them." By implication he admits that the English expression involved plain speaking on concrete questions, which stimulated Frenchmen to similar expression and to action. That is the gist of the matter.

I may add that Pattison made an odd blunder when he wrote in his *Memoirs*<sup>2</sup> that Buckle (as quoted in Mr Huth's *Life*) said Pattison's review in the *Westminster* "was the only one which he considered to have touched the merits of the book." What Buckle said, in a letter to his friend Capel,<sup>3</sup> was—"Indeed the only real judgment of my book is that in the *Saturday Review*." In the same letter—and this seems the occasion of Pattison's mistake—he proceeds to controvert the criticism in the *Westminster*. I transcribe his answer, which I may say was not in my mind when I wrote the foregoing :—

"The *Westminster* reviewer brings two special charges against me. He says, first, that in the latter part of my volume I violate my own method, and write deductively instead of inductively ; and second, that while I deny the importance of individuals, I ascribe the greatest effects to Louis XIV.

I answer : First, that in the first five chapters I establish certain principles by *induction*, and in the next nine chapters verify these by a *deductive* application ; and that this is not an *infringement* of my

<sup>1</sup> Vol. cited, p. 403.

<sup>2</sup> P. 311.

<sup>3</sup> *Life*, i. 151.

method, but a necessary *change* of it, inasmuch as the alteration of *aim* requires an alteration of *treatment*. The *Principia* are partly inductive and partly deductive, but who on that account ever charged Newton with inconsistencies? They alone are inconsistent who do not change their scheme if the change of plan demand it.

"To the second objection I say that I only ascribe a transient influence to Louis XIV., since his work was undone by the reaction of the eighteenth century. So that my general proposition still holds good—viz., that in the long run (or on the great average of affairs) individuals count for nothing. Besides this, I distinctly state, in chapter xi., that the way was *prepared* by the protective spirit for Louis XIV., so that even his transient influence was partly due to the action of those general causes which governed the march of the French mind."

Perhaps the absolutely impartial answer to Pattison will involve an admission that Buckle's phrases as to the "actions of individuals" cancelling each other<sup>1</sup> were wanting in circumspection; that he confounded different conceptions; and that in defending himself he was freshly confused, and did not even put his case in the best way for himself. When he wrote the passage in question he was evidently thinking of the caprices of private citizens, not of the action of public men. He had expressly argued<sup>2</sup> that "ignorant men are mischievous in proportion to their sincerity" when they meddle with government; and he further argues later<sup>3</sup> that the best legislation is that which undoes former legislation—that governments do good by removing restrictions. Further, he praises Richelieu<sup>4</sup> for reversing and resisting the fanatical tendencies of his predecessors and contemporaries. It is only in respect of efforts of rulers to do good in excess of the capacities of the people to respond—as in the case of Charles III. of Spain<sup>5</sup>—that he maintains the powerlessness of monarchs and governments. What he proves as to Louis XIV.—injurious repressive action—he had previously<sup>6</sup> proved as to George the Third in England. He ought thus to have answered, on Pattison's criticism, that he had *not* denied either the influence of rulers for evil or of individual

<sup>1</sup> I. 228.

<sup>2</sup> Pp. 183-185.

<sup>3</sup> Pp. 272-287.

<sup>4</sup> II. 27-77.

<sup>5</sup> II. 554-573.

<sup>6</sup> I. 444-498.

thinkers for the promotion of knowledge, and of individual statesmen in removing old obstacles. But, tripping for the moment over his own formula about individuals as moral units in the community, he caught at an unnecessary defence, and argues a fallacy. To belittle rulers' influences as "transient" amounts to nothing when we recognise that they *are* influences. But indeed Buckle had already fallen into fallacy in his book when he contended<sup>1</sup> that the rulers of a country never originate any "great political improvement" or "great reform" *because* they "have always been the inhabitants of that country; nurtured by its literature, bred to its traditions, and imbibing its prejudices"; *whereas*, "the first suggesters of such steps have invariably been bold and able thinkers." Are not *these*, then, "inhabitants of the country, bred to its traditions"? The historian answers himself when he writes of Richelieu. The fallacy is simply aggravated in the contention<sup>2</sup> as to the repeal of the English Corn Laws being due neither to the League nor to the government, but to "the march of public opinion." What, then, set up that march? What but the efforts of individuals, in large part organised by the League? It is abundantly idle to argue that the members of the League were only "swimming with the stream," and that the movement "began long before any of them were born." The beginners were individuals; and in any case the propaganda of Bright and Cobden was as much individual action as the reasoning of North and Smith. Nor is it anything to the purpose to say that North and Smith could not carry their point in their own day because the time was "not ripe." If, indeed, Buckle were arguing philosophically that all events, all ideas, are the necessary result of what went before, he would have been on safe and familiar ground; but that truth or truism clearly cannot be turned to the account of blaming blunderers for doing harm and denying credit to anybody for good. His purpose was avowedly not to establish Determinism, but to constitute a demonstration

<sup>1</sup> I. 272.<sup>2</sup> P. 273.

which should itself have a determinant influence in Sociology ; and we must decide that he fell into inconsistency. It is hardly possible to doubt that he would have acknowledged that, and rectified it, had he lived to revise his book at leisure in the light of the criticism it evoked, candid and other. The right formulas are easy to find, in the light of his own performance.

## CHAPTER V.

### PESCHEL'S CRITICISM.

§ 1. FOR a comprehensive and competent criticism of a great intellectual undertaking, some people would turn with more confidence in a German than in an English direction. As a matter of fact, Buckle has been fully though not frequently criticised in Germany, where such a book as his might have been expected to arouse as strong if not as wide an interest as it did in England. It is doubtful, however, whether on the whole the German criticism has been either more circumspect or more instructive than the English. The most painstaking of all the critiques on the book, indeed—if we except Theodore Parker's, in which the quantity of result is hardly commensurate with the copious and conscientious preparation—is a German one, with which we shall deal separately later; but the noticeable criticism of Oscar Peschel, already referred to, is at once laborious and careless. After some vacillating comments on the probable effects of stimulants on mental progress, in his popular and serviceable book on the Races of Mankind, Herr Peschel writes:—

“Let us be warned by the errors of Buckle, who, lured on by deceptive facts of this description, deceived himself and a willingly deluded multitude into a belief that it is possible to explain the course of the history of the most highly civilised nations by the chemical constituents of their food.”<sup>1</sup>

Seeing that Herr Peschel has been specifically discussing the direct physiological effects of alcohols and narcotics on mental processes, individual and social, the distinct implication here is that Buckle traced the mental history

<sup>1</sup> *The Races of Men and their Geographical Distribution*, Eng. tr., 1876, p. 166.

of mankind as showing the physiological effects of different kinds of food on the processes of their thought. And in a subsequent chapter this implication is made a specific proposition. "In India as in Egypt," says Herr Peschel, "he [Buckle] beholds the people, devoid of all will, yielding themselves completely to the priesthood"—**this alleged surrender being represented as the outcome of a starchy diet.**<sup>1</sup> The reader will perhaps accord some comparative weight to my deliberate estimate that this is quite the stupidest misconception of Buckle's meaning that has been fallen into by any critic of fair standing. German mistakes have indeed the thoroughness of German method in general. Buckle made no estimate whatever of the probable effect of any class of food on the mental processes of those who consume it. He did not even attempt such an estimate where he very well might; and he expressly urges against Montesquieu that "he committed the error of studying the influence of nature over men considered as individuals, rather than over men considered as an aggregate society," adding, in a footnote, that "a hundred years after he [Montesquieu] wrote, we, with all our increased knowledge, can affirm nothing positively respecting the direct action of climate, food, and soil, in modifying individual character."<sup>2</sup> Buckle's own position was that we can only ascertain their action on individual minds "through the medium of social and economical organisation."<sup>3</sup> In the part of his book with which Herr Peschel has dealt he was undertaking to show that where food was primarily abundant and the climate such as to

<sup>1</sup> *The Races of Men and their Geographical Distribution*, Eng. tr., 1876, p. 312.

<sup>2</sup> II. 319.

<sup>3</sup> He does indeed also lay it down (i. 43) that "climate influences labour not only by enervating the labourer or by invigorating him, but also by the effect it produces on the regularity of his habits;" and he observes that "this has been entirely neglected by the three most philosophical writers on climate: Montesquieu, Hume, and M. Charles Comte." This form of causation he goes on to trace in the national character of Sweden and Norway, and Spain and Portugal. But as regards food he nowhere admits any such direct modification.

lessen needs in general, population easily multiplied ; that an easily multiplied population, representing an abundance of cheap labour, meant abjection for the mass ; and that only in conditions less easy have civilisations arisen in which the tendency towards inequality, unchecked in such primary civilisations, can be effectively checked. This important sociological generalisation Herr Peschel entirely misses. He directs his artillery on a doctrine which nobody ever advanced.

§ 2. After this, profit is hardly to be expected from Herr Peschel's animadversions. In his seven pages of criticism, however, some suggestive objections are thrown out among others which are merely unintelligent. Alluding to Buckle's theory of the effects of portents in fostering superstition, he writes :—

“‘Italy, Spain, and Portugal,’ says Buckle, ‘are, of all countries in Europe, most frequently visited by earthquakes ; earthquakes intimidate the mind of man ; consequently the belief in the interference of supersensual powers with the physical order of the world has been more stubbornly maintained among the inhabitants of Southern Europe than in other parts.’”<sup>1</sup>

We have here presented as a quotation what is not a quotation at all, but a condensation of a passage ; and in the condensation there is small trace of Buckle's express remark that earthquakes are more frequent and destructive in Italy and the Peninsula “than in *any other of the great countries*.”<sup>2</sup> But there is a worse miscarriage than that. The critic continues :—

“The terrible catastrophe which befel Lisbon more than a hundred years ago, although it stands alone in magnitude, may in some degree justify us in considering Portugal among the countries in which earthquakes most frequently occur ; but Spain, although not entirely exempt, *is not a country either specially or even severely visited by earthquakes*. Japan, which so often trembles under the trident of Poseidon, is peopled by a cheerful race of men, given to tricks and jests, and heedless on subjects of religion. Russia, again, is almost entirely free from earthquakes, yet Italy has long been cleansed from a system of exorcism such as still prevails in the Greek Church.”

<sup>1</sup> Work cited, p. 309.

<sup>2</sup> I. 123.



Here we have once more the ignorant denial of the prevalence of earthquakes in Spain, which Buckle might be supposed to have made an end of by his note on the *Edinburgh Reviewer* in his second volume. Herr Peschel has evidently never read that volume, so he in turn exhibits his ignorance without misgiving. It will suffice to apply to him Buckle's comments on his fellow-student of the affairs of Spain, noting that the author of such a work as Peschel's is doubly discredited by such ignorance. As to Japan, his criticism is a repetition of one by Froude,<sup>1</sup> which is really suggestive. It errs in pronouncing the Japanese "heedless in matters of religion," and in implying that Buckle represented Italians and Spaniards as incapable of cheerfulness, tricks, and jests. The Japanese have in the past been religious enough,<sup>2</sup> and the populace still exhibit a good deal of superstition.<sup>3</sup> But the fact that they are not as a rule depressed or made specially superstitious by their frequent earthquakes is an interesting one, and is to be explained in a sufficiently simple way. Of all civilised races they have the slightest houses, building them as they do in large part of movable wooden frames covered with paper; and if anything can lessen the dangers of earthquakes it is the constructing of houses of such lightness that they suffer nothing from a moderate shock, while their fall is little more dangerous than that of a tent.<sup>4</sup> The fact is in no way subversive of Buckle's generalisation, which was applied to nations with solid dwellings; it proves simply that certain expedients can reduce the average danger of earthquakes in a remarkable degree. As regards Russia, again, it is true that it is in the mass superstitious; and Buckle's formula should have been

<sup>1</sup> *Short Studies on Great Subjects*, i. 10.

<sup>2</sup> See the *Voyages* of Thunberg, French trans. (1796), iii. 206.

<sup>3</sup> See W. G. Dixon's *Land of the Morning* (1882), pp. 502-517.

<sup>4</sup> In the great earthquake of 1855, in which nearly 16,000 buildings were destroyed at Yedo, it is believed that fire was the real cause of most of the destruction. At Tokiyo, Mr Dixon notes, "many buildings, and these of but moderate strength," survived the same earthquake uninjured (Work cited, p. 22). They clearly survived *because* they were of such moderate strength.

modified to the extent of recognising that where a population for *any* reason remains grossly ignorant, under a religion transmitted from a superstitious age, it will abound in superstition. The archaic Greek Church simply preserves the exorcising usages of the first centuries of the Christian Church; and the manifold forces which keep Russia politically unprogressive involve the maintenance of the most ancient usages of the State religion. In other words, other and secondary causes effect in Russia what such causes as earthquakes are seen to have primarily effected in Italy. To make out a modification of this kind is one of the best services a critic can render to a writer and to his readers. But Herr Peschel is less bent on rectifying than on upsetting; and he ends by upsetting, so far as his book goes, the whole truth concerned, inasmuch as he suggests that Italy is after all not superstitious. In point of fact the people of Italy maintain among themselves to a great extent the practice of exorcism of which the Church has been "cleansed"—as they well may, when the Church prays against drought and pestilence—while in Russia, though the oppressiveness of the Government might conceivably throw men back on despondent pietism, the educated classes are on the whole perhaps freer from superstition than those of any other country.

§ 3. Coming to the thesis of the effect of preponderant Nature on mind in India, Peschel takes the line of arguing (1) that "cyclones" never go beyond Bengal,—as if tremendous storms under other names would not be similarly effective elsewhere; (2) that the Himalayas, to which Buckle had alluded, do not affect the thickly populated districts,—as if Buckle had done more than point to them as an item in the total Hindu experience; and (3) that when Buckle spoke of pestilences, "he was thinking only of the cholera which just at the time he wrote was making a fresh progress through Europe," whereas the Black Death and the plague were old acquaintances in the West. It is not clear whether Peschel, who often writes very confusedly, supposed cholera to be a modern development in

India. As a matter of fact, Buckle expressly affirms that the great European plagues have for the most part *always* proceeded from the East, and cites an array of authorities to prove this.<sup>1</sup> Peschel's assertion that he "was thinking only of the cholera" could only have been made by one who did not read through the passage he was criticising. Proper information on this, as on other topics he discusses, he had not taken the trouble to acquire.

§ 4. A little effort towards grasping Buckle's argument as a whole would have saved Herr Peschel the trouble of pushing the proposition that "if the dangers and anxieties inherent in a place of abode exercise a control such as Buckle attributes to them over the dispositions of the people, the Dutch ought to be far more credulous than the Belgians"—their dangers from inundation having been so formidable. Buckle's theory being to the effect that in Europe man triumphed over nature in the ratio of his intellectual development, which was here fostered to begin with by the relative manageableness of nature, the Dutch were for him one of the best illustrations of that phase of progress. Their civilisation was not primary or even secondary, but represented a late application of acquired science to a specific problem, under peculiar commercial conditions, which made the attempt specially worth while. A little of the spirit of candour, of disinterested science, would set a critic combining his facts with his author's, and seeing whether they did not make a harmonious whole, to the gain of mankind in general. But Peschel, like the majority of Buckle's assailants, has no higher purpose than contradiction; and once again his inspiration brings him to confusion when, trying every weapon in turn, he decides that, on Buckle's theory, "sailors and miners ought to be more superstitious than any other craftsmen, for they are peculiarly exposed to freaks of the forces of nature quite beyond calculation, *yet no one has ever stated that this is the case in any perceptible degree.*" No one has ever stated it! Before

<sup>1</sup> I. 130-131, note 207. Cp. p. 139, note 223.

Herr Peschel's face, if he had chosen so much as to consult the index of the book he was so wantonly depreciating, there lay the statement and the justification. "The credulity of sailors," writes Buckle, "is notorious, and every literature contains evidence of the multiplicity of their superstitions, and of the tenacity with which they cling to them."<sup>1</sup> He adds in a footnote: "I much regret that I did not collect proof of this at an earlier period of my reading. But having omitted taking the requisite notes I can only refer on the superstitions of sailors to"—thirteen different travellers and observers, from Ibn Batuta to Leigh Hunt! He might well have omitted all note-taking on a point so fully within the knowledge of every reader of books about sea-faring, indeed of every reader except a German specialist whose specialty lies in a different line. Herr Peschel thinks Genesis is evidence against Buckle as to the diet of the ancient Egyptians, but he can blot the Book of Jonah from the book of his recollection when it might seem to bear Buckle out. As to miners, the evidence is only less abundant. They *are*, as a rule, more superstitious than handicraftsmen above ground; and in England last century they offered the broadest field for the propaganda of Wesley and Whitfield. That they have, as a body, grown less superstitious in our own day is largely owing to the fact that so many of them, in certain districts at least, have turned their special leisure to account in the way of reading; and, further, to the fact that year by year the nature of mining dangers is better understood and the risks are better guarded against. Buckle omitted to deal with the case of miners; but he pointed to the effect of greater variability of working conditions in making agriculturists as a rule more superstitious than mechanics. It is all reasonable enough to the reader who is willing to understand.

§ 5. As we go on, it becomes less and less worth while to spend time over Herr Peschel's strictures; but some of them still need to be exposed.

<sup>1</sup> I. 375.

"Lastly," he writes, Buckle deceived himself and the credulous reader when he states that the old Egyptians were date-eaters. We are far from disputing that they knew and cultivated date palms, *for we should be at once met*" [an interesting glimpse into Herr Peschel's ethical code] "by an appeal to their ancient monuments, which bring their daily life before us as in a picture book. But we deny that the date was a constant or even an important article of food; on the contrary, we maintain that it was only an auxiliary or supplementary food of the Pharaonic people. [*Note by Peschel. The merit of the Arab conquerors in first instituting and diffusing the cultivation of dates in Egypt is an acknowledged fact. H. Stephan, Das heutige Aegypten, 1872.*] Buckle can hardly suppose that the Joseph of Bible history gathered up dates into the royal garner during the seven years of plenty. Nor can he imagine that during the seven years of scarcity Jacob sent his sons to Egypt to buy dates. When, in the days of Moses, divine plagues were inflicted upon Egypt, a hailstorm destroyed, not the date groves but the barley and the flax, and spared the other crops, which had not yet sprung up. The date is the daily food only in the date oases of Arabia, and, to a much greater extent, in those of North Africa, in Fezzan, and Southern Algeria, that is to say, on the edge and in the midst of the Sahara; there it trains up independent and warlike desert tribes which have not the most remote relationship to the rice-eating Hindus, but are of a completely different character."

Thus could a German specialist employ the Bible as historical material in 1874. The specialism of German culture, noted by Buckle, often has this result of leaving an "expert," outside of the Biblical field, contentedly resting on testimony which all the Biblical experts know to be worthless. Thus it comes about that quite a number of comprehensive German histories of antiquity, such as Duncker's, and the compilations of Ranke and G. Weber, present, alongside of critical studies of Greek and other "non-sacred" histories, absolutely uncritical *resumés* of the traditional history of the Jews. It is sometimes difficult to make sure whether the explanation is specialist ignorance or merely official orthodoxy. In the case of Herr Peschel, we are evidently dealing with a true believer; and the fact throws much light on his whole treatment of Buckle. The latter, indeed, writing in 1860, accepted the gist of the Biblical narratives with a good deal of docility,

adopting<sup>1</sup> the traditional view of Hebrew theological evolution somewhat as Professor Huxley did much later,<sup>2</sup> and as Mr Harrison does to-day, when he confidently decides that the Sabbath was really a "Mosaic institution," despite the contrary avowals of the Rev. Professor Sayce. But Buckle's religion was not calculated to appease the truly orthodox; and his neglect of the legend of Joseph as an evidence on Egyptian habits has evidently injured him with Herr Peschel. On the point in dispute, however, he has only injured Biblical authority along with his own. First of all, the legend of Joseph's accumulation of corn has plainly no historical value whatever. The grain crop in Egypt, on which Herr Peschel lays stress, is dependent on the Nile flood; and the sacred narrative, instead of specifying failure of the Nile flood, speaks of the famine as a universal one, bringing Canaanites to Egypt for succour. It is a "tendency-myth," framed to develop the Israelite legend. Secondly, the fact dwelt on in the story of the ten plagues is only one more proof that that story is pure fiction. Thirdly, it is only by an inadvertence that Buckle, in one passage,<sup>3</sup> makes dates the chief sustenance of the people. A page or two further on,<sup>4</sup> after noting that in the Thebaid the principal food is the grain *dhourra*, he mentions that in Lower Egypt, where *dhourra* was formerly unknown, the people made a sort of bread from the lotos, and "chiefly lived" on other plants and herbs—among which, however, he omitted to specify the particularly abundant lentil. As to ancient Egypt, his authorities are Herodotus and Wilkinson; and, barring the uncorrected discrepancy of his adjectives, his account is substantially right all round. And his verbal lapse is a trifle compared with Herr Peschel's bad blunder of admitting in his text that the date-palm belonged to ancient Egypt, while asserting in a footnote on the same page that it was first introduced by the Saracens. Straining out a gnat from Buckle, the critic engulfs a camel in his commentary. The final fact is that at all times dates have been abundantly eaten

<sup>1</sup> See i. 257-8.<sup>2</sup> See his *Hume*, p. 20.<sup>3</sup> I. 85.<sup>4</sup> P. 87.

in Egypt ; but the really important point is simply that there was an abundance of cheap and nourishing food of various sorts always available to maintain a redundant population. Herr Peschel's final remark as to the character of the warlike desert tribes is one more expression of his hallucination as to Buckle's main thesis. It does not even occur to him to make the reasonable criticism that the facts prove mere dates to be insufficient to maintain an excessive and abject population.

§ 6. It is certainly not worth while, finally, to dwell on Herr Peschel's objection to Buckle's remark that the enormous series of figures used by the Hindus in their mythology to express the age of their fabulous personages are a proof of a servile reverence for antiquity. "We are more inclined to discern in this," says Herr Peschel, "a predisposition for arithmetic." At this point discussion may be abandoned. One German criticism of Buckle has visibly passed from miscomprehension and ignorant blundering, by the paths of slovenliness and foregone opinion, to puerility and nullity ; and Buckle stands very much as before.

## CHAPTER VI.

### VORLÄNDER'S CRITICISM.

THE most elaborate criticism of Buckle that I have met with is that of Herr Franz Vorländer, contributed to the *Preussische Jahrbücher* of 1862. This alone of all the studies on his book attempts to deal with it at once theoretically and in practical detail; and if it passes over some of the phases of the theory over which Peschel has come to such sad confusion, it seeks on the other hand to cover Buckle's handling of all five special cases of England, France, Germany, Scotland, and Spain. Whether the criticism is in general valid remains to be considered; but it is to be admitted at the outset that here at length we have a specialist who has taken some trouble with the problem. Herr Vorländer was the author of several works on historical philosophy, of which I have seen two: his *Grundlinien einer organischen Wissenschaft der menschlichen Seele* (Berlin, 1841), and his *Wissenschaft der Erkenntniss: im Abriss systematisch entworfen* (Marrburg and Leipzig, 1847). Neither of these seems to have made any lasting impression or had any wide influence in Germany; but his criticism of Buckle is none the less entitled to careful attention, were it only for its own carefulness. I take the main sections in their order.

#### § 1. *The Greeks and Romans.*

At the outset, Herr Vorländer remarks that Buckle leaves entirely out of his survey the Greeks and Romans,

"in whose history men were formerly wont to study the laws of history. Although Buckle gives no reason for this disregard, we shall not dispute that he had good grounds for it: the progress in civilisation



which these peoples had made is in no way to be explained by resort to inductive natural-science knowledge. Had he further impartially kept in view the history of civilisation in the Middle Ages, he must, in despite of his formula, have recognised that the Protective spirit (*bevormundende Geist*) of the Church and the State maintained and furthered civilisation. Let us, however, follow him on the ground of the subjects that he has chosen for himself."<sup>1</sup>

As Herr Vorländer puts his proposition in regard to Greek and Roman history thus incidentally, I will leave it for confutation, as put by another German writer, in another chapter.<sup>2</sup> Suffice it here to say that Buckle's avoidance of the old classic ground of discussion was probably decided on just because the habit of making Greek and Roman civilisation the test case for the old theories had made it peculiarly difficult to get men to take a fresh view of it. He might also, with his high ideal of historic qualification, decide that he was less well prepared by first-hand study to handle Greek and Roman political history than to handle that of modern Europe. In any case, as will be shown hereafter, his method is as perfectly applicable to the ancient as to the modern cases. The implicit assertion of Vorländer, that he explained progress in civilisation "by resort to inductive natural science knowledge," is an absurdity which we need not pause to discuss. The point as to the "protective spirit," again, will arise later in the present chapter.

### § 2. *English and German Development.*

The first attack-in-force by the German critic on Buckle's positions is a somewhat obscure criticism on his resort to induction in connection with his view of English freedom :—

"The inductive method works in its place, where it operates on the foundation of facts and their immediate causes, diligently and efficiently enough, but it cannot succeed thereby in carrying spiritual liberty to a higher stage, because it cannot itself be raised to the level of the highest general laws, and this least of all in the sphere of the spiritual life. It can combine with the perception of single subordinate laws of nature much superstition and spiritual bondage, because only the

<sup>1</sup> *Preussische Jahrbücher*, ix. (1862) 503-4.

<sup>2</sup> See chapter viii. § 6.

knowledge of universal laws completely precludes superstition and unreason, and because, as Buckle himself remarks, 'the same people who believe that Nature will not be disturbed by any marvellous aberrations, will not believe that Man will be just as little disturbed.' Now, universal laws of the intellectual life are least of all to be established through mere induction, through collection of facts; the inner relation of these can be found only through a progressive, critical, systematising union of observations. And thus we see why it is that scientific and inductive knowledge, if it had really been carried further in England than in other European countries, has not raised intellectual freedom to any very important degree. The political freedom of the English has by no means resulted in social freedom, because the necessary conditions in other directions are lacking. Wherein these consist is best shown by the example of German intellectual freedom. That has been attained by the German people, not through the 'inductive' or the 'deductive' method, but, on the one hand, through the critical work of thinking (*kritische Arbeit des Denkens*) and the deepening (*Vertiefung*) of that in the living development of individual and people in philosophy, history, poetry, and criticism; on the other hand, through the corresponding agitation and elevation by *moral* ideas of our national literature in general. That has not been degraded by a crude naturalistic struggle against religion and the moral powers; it is much rather conducted by the latter, even in opposition to Church and State. Herein lies the reason why the goal of intellectual freedom has been attained in a much higher degree by the Germans than by any other European people. The intellect of the English people was too much occupied with the practical affairs of the State and commercial life to find the leisure and inducement to penetrate deeper into itself and the laws of the intellectual life."<sup>1</sup>

The latter part of this passage, barring the religious implications, has in it a great deal of truth. It is true, and it has not been as a rule properly recognised, that English intellectual energy within the present century has been preëminently concerned with the commercial and political problems of the national development on a commercial basis; while German energy, for the first three-quarters of the century at least, was in the main divided between its militarist problem and the manifold cultivation of knowledge which went on at its numerous universities. When the century opened, the English commercial basis and bias had already established a common social ideal of income

<sup>1</sup> *Preussische Jahrbücher*, as cited, S. 504-5.

and "comfort" which was incompatible with any general devotion to research on a small income: while in uncommercial and uncentralised Germany, with its many provincial capitals of small size and its many universities, the much lower standards of living concurred with the tendency of the university system to foster a large class of studious specialists, content to live the intellectual life laboriously on small means. The further fact that in England the predominant Church controlled the two main universities, and thus bent the higher education to its own corporate ends, told in the same direction as the commercial bias, curtailing at once intellectual activity and intellectual freedom within the university world. The very different circumstances of the many German universities ensured for many years a high degree of independence<sup>1</sup> among even the theological teachers. Under the empire, the growing force of centralisation and regimentation has checked this independence; but for three-quarters of the century the conditions have certainly made for freedom. The *causes* assigned by Herr Vorländer for this development (as is so customary in German theorising) are mere abstractions of the process itself; and his claim of superior moral tendency for his nation<sup>2</sup> is considerably cruder than anything said by Buckle on behalf of England. The great merit of Buckle's own method is that, despite a little patriotic bias, it excludes merely racial or nationalistic explanations, and exacts a real analysis. It can thus lead us to conclusions which Buckle's personal equation may have obscured for him. Thus we can see that the "protective spirit," which for the first seventy years of the century kept France more or less repressed on the side of

<sup>1</sup> In this freedom of teaching there have been fluctuations. Thus the toleration of Friedrich the Great was curtailed by his successor; and Kant was seriously hampered. See Stuckenberg's *Life of Kant*, pp. 360-364. Cf. Coleridge, *Biog. Lit.*, ch. ix. Hegel on the other hand actually lent himself to the suppression of free political discussion. Haym, *Hegel und seine Zeit*, 1857, S. 352-365.

<sup>2</sup> On the value of earlier claims of the same sort, see Lévy-Bruhl, *L'Allemagne depuis Leibniz*, 1880, pp. 181-183.

her political energies, while England was developing these equably and continuously, involved the compensation of forcing French energy into the arts to an extent which neither commercial and political England nor military and studious Germany came near. Thus the French have successively or concurrently developed drama, the novel, sculpture, and painting, as no other nation has done; the recent Russian development of fiction, and the Scandinavian development of fiction and drama, being clearly results of the French stimulus. Broadly speaking, Frenchmen have treated fiction and painting and sculpture with the serious and scientific energy which in other countries is in general given only to other forms of intellectual effort; though all the while France has certainly not neglected the less artistic forms of study. The truth is, roughly, that in every nation there is a mass of energy which tends to flow this way or that according to the facilities. England has paid for political freedom in the form of much rhetorical steam, much deliquescence in clap-trap, much commonplace, and much contented vulgarity of taste; as Germany has paid for her isolated specialism in the shape of much uncouth and sentimental and sprawling art, literary and plastic, and in a defect of practical daylight judgment among her burrowing specialists. On the other hand, as has been before noted, the political conditions in Germany have involved a repression of free speech in ordinary life to an extent to which it has never been carried in England. In the first half of the century, during the heat of the rage against the French Revolution, there were many ferocious attempts to suppress popular anti-theological literature and discussion in this country; but in Germany at this moment there is absolutely no freedom of popular anti-theological discussion. A jest at such a primeval absurdity as the Holy Coat of Trèves sends a newspaper editor to jail. It is a remarkable fact that in a nation which some Protestants still vaguely reckon as Protestant in the mass, the Catholic influence is stronger for tyranny than in Italy or Spain, to say nothing of France and Belgium. The latter

countries have an energetic popular Freethought propaganda; whereas in Germany the slightest approach to platform criticism of current creeds is liable to be met by prosecution and imprisonment. And here lies the crux for Germany in the future. The esoteric intellectual freedom of which Herr Vorländer boasted thirty years ago is likely to come badly off, unless it is bottomed on a thorough conquest of intellectual freedom throughout the social system. When the Kaiser takes the proffered hand of the Jesuits and makes common cause with the great reactionary force of Catholicism against the ever-advancing force of Socialism, we shall know how far a remote and Olympian specialism of thought has prepared the nation to defend that general and open freedom which is as the breath of life to civilisation. What Buckle and others before him said of the absolute gulf between the learned class and the general public may not be so true to-day as it was in 1860; but the simple fact that the grossest mediæval superstition still prevails on an immense scale in a nation which claims to be the best educated in Europe, is sufficient testimony to the general accuracy of his account. The German Catholic worship of the Coat of Trèves is a cruder form of superstition than the French Catholic resort to Lourdes; and neither form of superstition could flourish to the same extent in England. We too have our compensations.

As for Herr Vorländer's notion that Buckle connected English induction with popular freedom as cause and effect, it is a misconception. Buckle's statement is<sup>1</sup> that "where the deductive method of inquiry has predominated, knowledge, though often increased and accumulated, has never been widely diffused," whereas "when the inductive method has predominated, the diffusion of knowledge has always been considerable;" and that the modern inductive philosophy "has been intimately *connected* with the awakening of the public mind, and *coincides with* that spirit of inquiry and with that love of liberty which have been constantly

<sup>1</sup> III. 461.

advancing since the sixteenth century." He does not say that, in the first instance, the inductivism precedes and causes the love of liberty. When he points out that the century of the Baconian philosophy was remarkably insubordinate, he implies that the two phenomena are correlated results of more general antecedents.<sup>1</sup> And when he goes on to say that the transplantation of the inductive philosophy to France in the next century was a main cause of the Revolution, though he here somewhat unduly narrows the explanation of the Revolution, he states a solid truth. He elsewhere shows that the exclusion of the French intellect from political discussion involved a special activity in the discussion of opinions, which prepared the soil for a rapid development of political criticism when the mouldering walls of political restraint gave way. And in our own time, it is noticeable that in Germany the development of the great movement of Socialism is coincident with the general dissemination of the inductive biology. Indeed, Haeckel is understood to complain that in Germany to-day there is far too much of mere induction in science, far too little thought of broad general views.

For the rest, it is not necessary to discuss, though it may be well to indicate, the fact that Buckle did not draw an absolute line between deduction and induction, and was quite aware of the reasoning which rejects such a division. He writes<sup>2</sup> :—

"It is often said, and probably with truth, that all deduction is preceded by induction, so that in every syllogism the major premiss, however obvious and necessary it may appear, is merely a generalisation of facts. . . . But . . . even supposing that all deduction rests ultimately on induction, . . . there are innumerable cases in which the induction takes place at so early a period of life that we are unconscious of it."

This brings us in sight of the solution, implied also in his remark that "for one person who can think there are

<sup>1</sup> Vorländer actually admits later (see below, pp. 154, 178) that Buckle put the case in this way.

<sup>2</sup> III. 463.

at least a hundred persons who can observe. An accurate observer is no doubt rare, but an accurate thinker is far rarer." That is partly irrelevant generalisation, but it rightly leaves us to the surmise that where the freedom of discussion and the possession of fair means are most general, inductive methods will tend to be developed earliest, inasmuch as the average intelligence will have more influence than elsewhere. In other words, as Scotland and Germany become more commercialised and less repressed—the former by the clergy, the latter by the State—their inductiveness would tend to increase.

### § 3. *English Political Development.*

How much the mere habit of being regimented tends to form a man's way of sociological thought may be gathered from Herr Vorländer's further theorising on the motive forces of English political development :—

"The sciences also have been preponderatingly turned to the practical province. The English philosophy has, since Locke—naturally opposed by the Scottish Hume—brought forth nothing original. Its Utilitarian morality dispensed with all scientific support, and was not devoted to elevating the mind above the common. But as to the condition of intellectual freedom in England, there has further to be considered the relation of the citizen classes to the aristocracy. One of the main grounds of the *social* bondage of the English lies in one of the essential conditions of their *political* freedom, namely, in the predominance of the influence of the aristocracy. That under the reign of Charles II. such important legislative reforms were made in the interest of the people, Buckle sees as a result of the bold, sceptical, inquiring spirit which had invaded theology, science, and politics. To the same spirit he ascribes, in the eighteenth century, the introduction of political societies, and the publication of the parliamentary debates, and most particularly the development of the power of public opinion, so that, in spite of the despotic efforts of George III., there was progress in freedom, and in the nineteenth century those great reforms in government were accomplished. We, for our part, are not inclined to deny that the development and spread of the scientific spirit had a certain part in the progress of popular freedom in England; but the examples of other European nations, in which, at least in later times, the bold sceptical spirit of inquiry was as little lacking as in England, and

which yet made little or no progress in freedom, point very clearly to other operating factors — to the sound practical understanding and faculty, to the prosperity and commercial enterprise, and the moral peculiarities bound up with that, as well as to what is essentially connected with all these—the long-established English constitution. That, however, came into existence, not through the sceptical spirit, and certainly not through the citizen classes, but primarily through the higher aristocracy and the gentry, with whom, certainly, the commons coöperated. It is an incontrovertible fact that the English owe their political freedom originally and primarily to that Protection by the higher classes which Buckle detests. It was they who, as Gneist has so admirably shown, accepted along with the administrative rights of lordship or protection the relative duties and burdens; it was they who at once led and trained the citizen classes to freedom. And even till our own day the aristocracy steers the ship of State with the acquiescence of the citizen classes, and exercises a certain Protection. From the political life this Protection has penetrated into the social. 'It leads them,' remarks Erskine May of the aristocracy, in his *Constitutional History*, 'in politics, in the magistracy, in local administration, in works of usefulness and charity, in the hunting-field, the banquet, and the ball-room.' The upper classes rule public opinion in the ecclesiastical and social spheres in general, and thereby cause that bondage of the individual which Mill so keenly and powerfully attacked."<sup>1</sup>

In this somewhat confused passage we have an illustration at once of the German tendency to find a primary cause in an abstract idea, and of the further German tendency to find such a cause in a protective initiative. What Herr Vorländer meant by "social bondage" is not quite clear, though he refers to Mill's *Liberty* as throwing a strong light on the conditions of *social Unfreiheit* in England. I have already constated the facts of the intellectual restraint in the universities. If he means the social slavery to convention, the fear of being boycotted, we may admit that such fear really exists, being in large part a product of all-round commercialism. Men fear to affect their incomes by outspokenness. But, on the other hand, there is an abundance of such "social bondage" even in Protestant Germany, where unbelievers habitually maintain their nominal connection with the Church; and, on

<sup>1</sup> S. 505-6.



the other hand, the social bondage in England has nothing specially to do with the aristocracy. That class has enough to answer for without this.

As for the view that political freedom in England is a result of the compound forces of sound practical understanding, commercial enterprise and prosperity, and the constitution, the last being in turn the work of the aristocracy—we could not have a better test case to show the futility of the old fashions of historical explanation and the superiority of Buckle's. We want to know *how* Englishmen came to develop sound practical understanding, and commerce, and the constitution, and their peculiarly virtuous aristocracy. And Buckle showed, partly in outline and partly in detail, how the peculiar balance of class and other forces which was set-up at the Conquest tended to affect the aristocracy, and shape the constitution under which a general political capacity was developed. It is an easy extension of that line of explanation to show how the geographical situation and the natural conditions tended to develop commerce; how, again, when England was in a fair way to be as despotically ruled as France, the accidental crisis of 1688, followed by the advent of an alien and unpopular King, threw matters again into a healthier groove; how, yet again, the later advent of yet another dynasty, of which two Kings in succession could only act through Ministers, being unable even to speak the English language, established the system of Ministerial and Parliamentary Government; and how, finally, after George III. had again established a mischievous regal tyranny, the disrepute of his successor and the expansive power of the new industrialism combined to maintain the democratic principle. The doctrine of a beneficent initiative in the aristocracy seems almost beneath refutation; and yet it seems still to be embraced by Mr Lecky.<sup>1</sup> It is at once disposed of by substituting the historical explanation of the English aristocracy. At the outset, that aristocracy had to lean on the people as against the King. In

<sup>1</sup> *History of England in the 18th Century*, I., ch. ii.

the Wars of the Roses it was nearly exterminated, and the new Tudor peerage was drawn from the middle class. In the Civil War, it was set aside by the middle class. In 1688, strengthened by influx and repose, and taught by experience, it managed affairs at once in its own interest and in that of the community; and it was in this and the next generation only, as Buckle particularly pointed out,<sup>1</sup> that the House of Lords compared favourably with the Commons. In subsequent periods it has indeed figured largely at the head of affairs, mainly for harm; and it has done this simply because it represents the leisured rich class, from the main body of which it has constantly been recruited. Parliament has had to be filled by men of independent means; and the ranks of the aristocracy are filled from the mass of the energetic rich, with a sprinkling of the distinguished. The notion of a *primum mobile* of special conscientiousness in the English aristocracy *qua* English aristocracy may satisfy the school of Gneist and Mommsen, but it is no longer valid for the "practical English understanding" with its obstinate inductiveness, Sir Erskine May notwithstanding. For at least fifty years the "leading" of the aristocracy has simply been an obeying of democratic pressure.

#### § 4. *Scottish Development.*

In Herr Vorländer's brief discussion of Buckle's treatment of Scotch history there is, as in his other sections, a measure of cogency and a lack of conclusiveness. He writes:—

"In the second volume Buckle occupies himself especially with the Scotch, in order to demonstrate the influence of religious superstition and intellectual Protectionism in preventing freedom among them. We entirely pass over his delineation of the superstition and incivilisation of the Scotch in earlier times, the truth of which was recently disputed with not inconsiderable force in the *Quarterly Review*. As regards the immediately important proposition that the Scotch at the present time are more superstitious than the English, Ruge<sup>2</sup> considers it to be

<sup>1</sup> I. 451.

<sup>2</sup> The German translator.

incorrect. In any case, here too the elucidating facts are not critically established. Granted, indeed, that they had been, Buckle's broad exposition of the deductive method of the Scotch thinkers effects little towards the explanation in hand. We dissent from the opinion that the deductive method influences the populace less than the inductive—for the latter also, in so far as a strictly and scientifically handled method is implied, fails to influence the people—that is to say, the lower citizen classes. To the educated middle classes of the towns, however, the Scotch philosophy and science offers no difficulties of comprehension, for the empirical analysis and criticism which prevails in that, applies itself in every way to the common understanding, and in no way transcends it. Even Hume's scepticism constitutes no exception to this, inasmuch as it offers no standing-ground on which anyone could rest. For the lack of intellectual freedom in Scotland, besides, Ruge sees in the democratic church-constitution far more cogent reasons than there could be in their scientific method."<sup>1</sup>

In a later chapter I shall deal in some detail with the remarks of Scotch critics, some of them better qualified to speak, on some of the points here raised. As regards the special superstition of the Scotch, it was certainly true in Buckle's time that they showed a much stronger disposition than did the English to believe in the efficacy of prayer and humiliation as cures for cholera. The truth is that the greater amount of leisured culture and the greater friction of commerce have long maintained in England a measure of saving worldliness which usefully if not philosophically qualifies the influence of religious dogma. It may be permitted to a Scotchman to say that probably the reasoning faculty is still cultivated rather more in Scotland than in England, and that the greater northern stress of creed is a matter of greater consistency, perhaps of greater primitive earnestness.

As regards, again, the failure of a deductive method to influence popular thinking, we shall see later that Buckle is substantially right. Herr Vorländer misses the point, which is that the deductive philosophy of Hume in particular (not that of Reid and the orthodox school) could exercise no influence on the general public. And this is peculiarly true. Nowhere, perhaps, is Hume less read and

<sup>1</sup> S. 506-7.

honoured than in his native land. Even Adam Smith bulks much less largely to the general Scottish intelligence than Burns, Scott, and Chalmers, and this not merely because he was a Deist, though that counts, but because he was a reasoner. In matters theological, Hume has counted for little with the general Scotch community, which is to be reached, like other communities, rather by the way of detail. Masses are to be moved only *a posteriori*. But as regards the want of intellectual freedom in Scotland, Ruge and Vorländer, I think, are partly right as against Buckle. His formula about the "paradox that the same people should be liberal in politics and illiberal in religion" seems to me to be fallacious in its terms, at least when he puts it as an equivalent statement that the Scotch are peculiarly "democratic." The people are democratic, or rather *demotic*, because they have been developed in that direction (1) by the drift of their aristocracy to the more attractive life of England, and (2) by their being always in a certain attitude of antagonism to aristocratic England, even after the Union. But this demotic tendency is not properly liberality. Liberality is a matter of mental attitude, and if it existed in a people it must surely affect their religion. And inasmuch as the master tendency of religion is to the fixation of ideas, and religion in Scotland has been made peculiarly potent because democratically organised, it is the dogmatic influence of religion that has most affected the form of opinion there, even in the period of expansive industrialism. Nor did Buckle overlook this. He expressly specified the close union of clergy and people at the Reformation, and later, as a result of the political circumstances, and as a main cause of the power of the clergy over life and thought. It may be added that in Scotland the upper and middle class have long been tending to Episcopalianism, thus standing aloof from the mass; while the Free Church schism of 1843, set up by an ecclesiastical issue, became in act a modified renewal of the ignorant fanaticism of previous times, inasmuch as it involved a good deal of class feud,

and the bulk of the people were thus immersed in a new quarrel, which, being directed to the region of ignorance, availed nothing towards their real development. They had not risen above old ideals: they relapsed into them. In the words of a writer in the *Times*—not a place where one looks for a good epigram—"the Scotch are Liberals because they are Conservatives." But all this, as we shall see, does not alter the fact that Buckle did an immense service towards the elucidation of Scotch history—a service which Herr Vorländer was hardly in a position to appreciate.

#### § 5. *French Influence on German Development.*

We come next to a question on which Herr Vorländer is naturally better entitled to a hearing. The result is not what might be supposed. On Buckle's generalisations as to German history, the German critic offers but a brief criticism, but one involving a sufficiency of negation, and random negation at that.

"According to Buckle, the German intelligence has this in common with the Scotch, that scientific knowledge is kept too high above the range or the standpoint of the people to have any entrance among them. Nowhere, he thinks, is the separation between the people and the learned so great as in Germany. The result is that in Germany, despite the excellence of its literature, the people are more superstitious and ignorant than in England and France. We fear it will be difficult for our historical philosopher to make good this proposition by facts in the third volume of his book, which is to deal with the history of the German intellect. From insufficient literary knowledge is derived his further idea that our literature of the eighteenth century owes its origin to the sceptical influence, and particularly of those in Berlin! It is notorious that our Lessing and Herder, Goethe and Schiller, owe much more to the influence of the ancient and of English literature than to the French."<sup>1</sup>

Here, where Herr Vorländer might reasonably be expected to be most secure in his positions, he is, I think, more ineffective than in his handling of non-German

<sup>1</sup> S. 507.

matters, as regards at least the most emphatic part of his contradiction. He has misconceived, to begin with, Buckle's proposition as to the French influence on German literature. That runs as follows:—

"The German literature, though now the first in Europe, owes its origin, as we shall hereafter see, to that great sceptical movement by which in France the Revolution was preceded. Before the middle of the eighteenth century, the Germans, notwithstanding a few eminent names, such as Kepler and Leibnitz, had no literature of real value; and the first impetus which they received was caused by their contact with the French intellect, and by the influence of those eminent Frenchmen who, in the reign of Frederick the Great, flocked to Berlin, a city which has ever since been the headquarters of philosophy and science."<sup>1</sup>

It is plain that by "literature" Buckle here did not mean simple *belles lettres*, but the whole range of research, including the physical sciences. The word was loosely used, but the context is unmistakable. He could not have meant to assert that in 1857 the Germans were at the head of European literature in poetry, fiction, and drama in particular; and the allusion to Berlin "philosophy and science" distinctly specialised his proposition. Now his statement was defective only in so far as it did not take note that the French impulse to the German intelligence was in part given before the accession of Frederick the Great. All German writers on the subject, without exception, now admit that whatever was living in German culture just before that period came from France.<sup>2</sup> The French influence was of long standing.

"Even before 1618 [the beginning of the Thirty Years' War] the heirs of rich families of pretension travelled to France, there to learn the language and the art of war, and to cultivate their minds. Not only in Paris, but in other great cities of France, they congregated in such numbers as now do the idle Russians and English. . . . Even before 1618 most of the western German courts were so devoted to French manners, that French was considered the elegant language for conversation and writing."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I. 237 (ch. v.).

<sup>2</sup> For a general survey, see J. J. Honegger's *Kritische Geschichte der französischen Cultureinflüsse in den letzten Jahrhundert* (Berlin, 1875).

<sup>3</sup> G. Freytag, *Pictures of German Life*, second series, Eng. trans., i. 81.

There had been, too, a special play of French influence in the Huguenot immigration, which so greatly influenced German industry; and the Huguenot families, so late as in 1850, formed self-centred bodies in all the larger German cities, where they "carefully maintained their relations with their connections in France."<sup>1</sup> But the immense backthrow of the Thirty Years' War would alone have served to keep the German mind backward and dependent during the ensuing century. Thus it came about that French literary example was the very origin of modern German literature. And a very good origin too. Even those who still execrate Gottsched, the leader of the French culture in Germany in the generation before Lessing and Goethe, admit that Gottsched in his day made at least as much for light as his early rivals; and all the more open-minded historians have long recognised that, by systematically employing the French influence, he did a great service, however narrow was his scope in relation to the men who superseded him. Sir Robert Phillimore makes the misleading statement that Gottsched and his school had "done their utmost to *lower* the national taste to the level of a base imitation of French literature."<sup>2</sup> There was in reality no taste to lower: French ideas were the beginning of any taste worth mentioning.<sup>3</sup> Schlosser, while copious in contempt for Gottsched's personality and calibre, admitted that "in consequence of the feeling of dislike which is entertained towards his person, the great services which he rendered to the country as the organ of his time, and as the reformer of school instruction, have been too frequently overlooked or forgotten;"<sup>4</sup> and the

<sup>1</sup> G. Freytag, *Pictures of German Life*, second series, Eng. trans., i. p. 281, and see below, p. 173.

<sup>2</sup> Pref. to his trans. of *Laocoon* (1874), p. 11.

<sup>3</sup> "In Frederick's youth, Germany had still a literature which must needs offend every progressive and tasteful spirit" (Kurz, *Geschichte der deutschen Literatur*, 1856, ii. 461 a). The same writer decides that about 1725 the German people "for the most part lacked taste and the most ordinary culture" (*Id.*, 462 a). Compare Freytag's *Pictures of German Life*, Eng. trans., 2nd series, i. 275-280.

<sup>4</sup> *History of the Eighteenth Century*, Eng. tr. (1843), i. 197. [The English arrangement of chapters does not follow the German.]

recognition of this is now general.<sup>1</sup> The issue of the translation of Bayle, and the eulogy of Montesquieu, were more than mere æsthetic leads to German society; but the æsthetic lead, too, was something more than a mere movement of imitation, for Gottsched sought to bring into fresh notice old work, such as the *Reineke Fuchs*, drawing on German *Geist* while using French light.<sup>2</sup> And the French influence did not end there, even in *belles lettres*. Wieland, after his early pietist period, abandoned the Bodmer school for the French, and became for Germany the representative of the French spirit, as apart from poetic forms.<sup>3</sup> Doubtless there were contemporary English influences; and Klopstock connects with the Swiss school of Bodmer, which swore by Milton and Addison; but these were not the preponderating forces. Schlosser at least decides<sup>4</sup> that "neither did Klopstock, the Swiss school, nor all the favourers of piety and sentiment who adopted their tone, succeed in bringing our country at large to a level with other enlightened and educated nations of Europe; but Wieland first, then Lessing, the new Berlin school, and finally Goethe." On Ebert's translation of Young he pronounces<sup>5</sup> that "the melancholy

<sup>1</sup> Mr Sime (*Life of Lessing*, i. 15-16) recognises Gottsched's importance, and has the note—"Gottsched's true significance was first pointed out in Danzel's learned treatise, *Gottsched und seine Zeit* [1848], by which all later historians of German literature have largely profited." But Schlosser pointed out the state of the case years before Danzel, as did Förster, who pronounced Gottsched "the reformer of the German language and poetry" (*Die Höfe und Cabinette Europa's in 18ten Jahrhundert*, Potsdam, 1839, iii. 280). Förster mentions a German Poetic Society, founded at Görlitz in 1697 by Johann Burchard Menken, as giving Gottsched his initiative. Mr Sime refers to Biedermann's *Deutschland im 18ten Jahrh.* for a "full and impartial account of Gottsched." Compare Vilmar, *Geschichte der deutschen National-Literatur*, 17te Aufl. S. 378.

<sup>2</sup> Gottsched was actually stung to a vindication of German literature by the taunts of the French refugee Mauvillon in his *Lettres Françaises et Germaniques* (1740). See the excellent work of M. Lévy-Bruhl, *L'Allemagne depuis Leibniz*, pp. 70-74, 180.

<sup>3</sup> Compare Schlosser as cited, i. 212; ii. 14, 18-20; F. Thimm's *Literature of Germany*, 2nd ed., pp. 39-42; G. Weber, *Geschichte der deutschen Literatur*, 11te Aufl. § 89.

<sup>4</sup> As cited, i. 222.

<sup>5</sup> As cited, i. 223.



tone of these 'Night Thoughts,' and of Klopstock's muse, was too nearly related to the old system; and German literature could never have been regenerated if there had not been some participation in the new European life, and some approximation to the Berlin school." The early Berlin school, in the nature of the case, drew from France;<sup>1</sup> and if we follow out Schlosser's apostolic succession, we find the same influence prolonged.

Vorländer, like some other German writers, would have Lessing to be a spontaneous Teutonic product; but competent German criticism admits that the facts are otherwise. No instructed reader can question, to begin with, that Lessing's early comedies are French in conception and method.<sup>2</sup> When he wrote them, he "probably knew Shakspeare as yet only by name," though he imitated Wycherley.<sup>3</sup> We have, again, his own oft-cited avowal that but for Diderot his dramatic and critical practice would probably have taken quite a different course.<sup>4</sup> Thus his very polemic against French dramatic conventions was

<sup>1</sup> It is a noteworthy fact that the first German translation of *Robinson Crusoe* (Leipzig, 1721) was made from a French version (Paris, 1720). Honegger, *Kritische Geschichte der französischen Cultureinflüsse*, S. 125.

<sup>2</sup> "His supreme model [in his early plays] was undoubtedly Molière, for whom . . . his admiration never wavered" (Sime's *Life*, i. 49). "Although Molière's method was that which Lessing followed, he was more indebted for particular hints to later French writers, above all to De L'isle and Marivaux. . . . As regards the construction of these plays, it is wholly French" (p. 61). Compare Honegger, *Kritische Geschichte der französischen Cultureinflüsse*, S. 126.

<sup>3</sup> Sime, i. 54. Lessing seems first to have met with Shakspeare in a German translation of *Julius Caesar*, in his twenty-first year.

<sup>4</sup> *Vorrede* to the 2d. ed. of his trans. of Diderot's *Theatre*; *Dramaturgie*, § 14. Lessing's debt to Diderot is admitted by his biographers Danzel and Guhrauer (pp. 472-481, and 321-3, cited by Sime); and by Hettner (*Literaturgesch. d. 18 Jahrh.*, 2ter Theil, ii. 330-2) in a grudging fashion. Thimm (as cited, p. 33) has the piquant statement that "even in France itself Diderot made common cause with Lessing against the classical French tragedies and against Voltaire in particular." Diderot's *Fils Naturel*, with its appended dialogues, appeared in 1757, and his *Père de Famille* in 1758. Lessing's *Minna von Barnhelm* only appeared in 1767, *Emilia Galotti* in 1771, and *Nathan der Weise* in 1779.

anticipated and stimulated by innovating French writers;<sup>1</sup> and the most impartial criticism recognises that his early critical work apart from the drama is of French inspiration.<sup>2</sup> Nor are his French studies less obvious in his greatest work, *Laokoon*; though it must be confessed that there he does not acknowledge them as he ought, perhaps by reason of an unconsciously developed spirit of nationalism. In any case, all his German expositors now admit that in *Laokoon* he adopts many doctrines laid down by Du Bos in his *Réflexions Critiques sur la Poésie et la Peinture*.<sup>3</sup> To say all this is not to dispute the strength and greatness of Lessing, or to deny that he bettered his French teaching: it is merely to state the facts of his literary heredity and to establish part of the truth as to the sources of the German renaissance of last century.

Buckle's proposition did not go further than the

<sup>1</sup> "Il serait difficile de trouver, dans toute la série de ses articles sur Corneille, sur Racine, sur Voltaire, une critique importante qui n'eût été formulée avant ou après lui par un écrivain français." A. Bossert, *Goethe, ses Précurseurs et ses Contemporains*, 1872, p. 71. On this head compare with Diderot, as above cited, the whole drift of the *Dialogues sur l'Eloquence* of Fénelon and his admirable *Lettre sur les Occupations de l'Académie Française*; also Rousseau's *Lettre à d'Alembert* and his early *Discours sur les sciences et les arts*. Schlosser (ii. 50) admits that Lessing fought the French theatre with French weapons. But some people will never learn that all conventions have had their critics within the sphere of their strongest sway.

<sup>2</sup> "He himself certainly learned to write prose of Diderot; and whatever Herr Stahr may think of it, his share in the *Letters on German Literature* got its chief inspirations from France." (Mr Lowell's *Lessing* in "Camelot" ed. of *Essays*, p. 303; cf. Mr Morley, *Diderot*, ed. 1884, p. 205.) And M. Lévy-Bruhl (as cited, p. 137) has the German critic Erich Schmidt with him (*Lessing*, i. 18) in the opinion that it was Bayle, Diderot, and Voltaire who opened up Lessing's path for him.

<sup>3</sup> See Blümner's *Einleitung* to the *Laokoon* (2 ed.) pp. 39-44. Blümner cites further the testimony of Konrad Leisaht, *Dubos et Lessing, Dissert. inaugurale*, Greifswald, 1874; Guhrauer, S. 17; Hettner, S. 268 ff.; Zimmermann (*Gesch. d. Aesth.*), S. 205 ff. Blümner justly decides that Lessing's finest things are not from Du Bos, but that has never been pretended. Compare the *Réflexions*, *1<sup>e</sup> Partie*, Sect. 3, 6, 13, 35, with *Laokoon*, ch. 2, 4, 11, 15, 16, 18, 20, &c. Lessing's English editors are agreed on the subject. See Sime's *Life*, i. 249; Phillimore's ed. of *Laocoon*, pp. xxiii.-iv.; Bohn ed., p. xii.

assertion as to the source of the first stimulus; and no one who has read his book or his life can suppose that he would have failed to recognise the English influences which, coming close upon the French, influenced the dramatic work of Lessing as well as that of Goethe and Schiller. He would have done full justice to the Shakspearean influence in particular: he would probably, like Mr Morley, have seen only the admirable side of *Nathan der Weise*, and perhaps, still like Mr Morley, have recognised the transference of supremacy in drama for the next generation to Germany without fully indicating how hollow in many respects the German quasi-Shakspearean drama was,<sup>1</sup> how faulty is much of Goethe, and how impermanent is much of Schiller; though he would, I think, have made clear enough to his readers that the classic German drama proved sterile, and that again it has been the function of the French genius to innovate alike in drama and fiction. It is a sociological fact of the first significance that Heinrich von Kleist should have left no successors, and that the artistic principles which produced *Der Zerbrochene Krug* should have been left to be independently rediscovered and enforced by Frenchmen after the war of 1870.

Even as regards Goethe, by the way, the importance of the French æsthetic influence is fully as great as that of the English, which Herr Vorländer would have us believe to have been the preponderating one. Goethe never knew English as he knew French; there *were* no English writers to influence him as Montesquieu and Voltaire and Rousseau and Diderot did; and it is certain that his first

<sup>1</sup> See Mr Morley's *Diderot*, ed. 1884, pp. 204, 227. To call *Nathan der Weise* a "noble dramatic poem," while substantially just, is to make very light of its vices as a play. One could wish to have had Voltaire's criticism of its plot (its doctrine he would assuredly have endorsed, as he had certainly precluded it) by way of offset to some of Lessing's criticism of the tragedies of the Patriarch. Mr Lowell does not indicate all these vices when he says that in *Nathan* (written in what Lessing "took for blank verse") the dramatist was "guilty of anachronisms which violate not only the accidental truth of fact but the essential truth of character" (Essay on *Lessing*, as cited, p. 306).

stimulations came from the French side.<sup>1</sup> And if the French influence be less obvious in the case of Herder,<sup>2</sup> and slight in that of Schiller, it was preponderant with many other writers. Lavater and Basedow<sup>3</sup> were, in particular, disciples of Rousseau, whose influence was then felt all over Europe.<sup>4</sup>

The issue is apt to be confused by the natural German feeling that to take a hint and a lead is not to confess lack of innate power. It is a proof of the still general crudity of national sentiment that there should be any sense of humiliation in the acknowledgment of national influences, and that it should be thought necessary to protest that one may be influenced without being denationalised. Goethe, whose moods varied like other people's, was moved to declare in one of them to Soret<sup>5</sup> that the French

<sup>1</sup> Take the admissions of Thimm:—"Goethe's artistic taste was much improved after the taking of Frankfurt by the French troops; when the French General, Count Thorane, a great connoisseur of paintings, was quartered in his father's house. The youth had to give up his own 'Mansardenzimmer,' which was fitted up as a studio, in which distinguished artists executed the commissions of the Count; and Goethe spent most of his time in this studio. The presence of the French in the town and in his house enabled him to improve his French, and procured him the opportunity of seeing French comedies and tragedies. . . . He could soon recite many passages from Racine, in which he imitated the declamation of the French actors; and he also became acquainted with the comedies of Destouches, Marivaux, and La Chaussie" (p. 97). He also read Homer first in a French prose translation, as Schiller's family circle read the Greek tragedians in the version of Brumoy (Honegger, as cited, S. 332). But still more decisive is Goethe's own mature testimony:—"How could I, to whom culture and barbarism are alone of importance, hate a nation which is among the most cultivated of the earth, and to which I owe so great a part of my own cultivation?" (*Conversations with Eckermann*, March 14, 1830. *Cp.* Jan. 3, 1830, for a testimony as to how, in Goethe's youth, Voltaire and his contemporaries "governed the whole civilised world.")

<sup>2</sup> Yet Herder, too, was stimulated by Rousseau. His prize essay on the Origin of Language (1770), was in Schlosser's opinion (ii. 55) the best, perhaps the only, refutation of Rousseau's paradoxes. Lessing had controverted them in the *Voss Gazette* in 1751 (Sime, i. 93).

<sup>3</sup> Schlosser, ii. 25, 34, 37.

<sup>4</sup> On the vogue of the *philosophes* in general, see Wachler, *Handbuch der Gesch. der Lit.*, 3te Umarb., 1833, iv. 239.

<sup>5</sup> *Conversations*, 1830, March 6. Bohn trans., p. 448. Contrast the above cited remark to Eckermann a few months before.

"even now have no influence over my productions," and that "Wieland himself, who imitated the French forms and manner, always remained a German at bottom." One reflects—

"He might have been a Rooshan,  
A Frenchman or a Prooshan,  
Or an I-tal-i-an";

and one freely agrees to credit Wieland with his loyalty to the unalterable. Schlosser decides that the *Agathon* was "only important in as far as it contributed to the banishment of French books from German life," by making it "superfluous to ask counsel from the French."<sup>1</sup> So be it, so far as may be: the point simply is that the French stimulus had acted.

The very reaction of Lessing, anticipated as it had been in France, is a proof of the intensity of the influence. He himself wrote to Nicolai<sup>2</sup> as to the absence of political and the abundance of religious freedom in "Frenchified Berlin"; and if the reaction was the beginning of a new life, that is but a new proof of the value of national impacts. Says the Abbé Denina,<sup>3</sup> writing just before the Revolution:—

"C'est exactement à l'époque de l'avènement de Frédéric II., et même à celle de l'établissement de l'académie de Berlin, qui date la littérature allemande. *L'émulation qu'excita l'introduction du françois dans un corps littéraire au centre de la Saxe, fit faire d'heureux efforts aux Allemands.*"

And the same author,<sup>4</sup> with the facts fresh in recollection, lets us see that the French influence was not neutralised, but only transmuted, by the English:—

"L'école Suisse de Bodmer et Breitinger qui semble l'avoir emporté sur celle de Gottsched, quelque partialité qu'elle marquât pour la littérature angloise, ne profita pas moins de la françoise. Et ceux qui soutinrent le parti suisse à Berlin, avoient bien plus lu de livres françois que d'anglois."

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<sup>1</sup> II. 18.

<sup>2</sup> Aug. 25, 1769.

<sup>3</sup> *La Prusse Littéraire sous Frédéric II* (1790), i. 51.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 84.

This is more than corroborated by Kurz :—

"Though Gottsched's personal influence was destroyed by Bodmer and Breitinger, the influence of French literature, if no longer paramount, was still powerful, and had indeed gained in strength, in that Friedrich II. uncompromisingly supported it."<sup>1</sup>

But Buckle's proposition, as we saw, had reference not merely to *belles lettres*, but to scientific or serious literature in general ; and as to this the evidence is no less decisive. Honegger specifies not only the French influence on German drama at the beginning of the eighteenth century, but the remarkable effect of the example of Montesquieu, Voltaire, and D'Alembert on the German treatment of history, as seen in the work of Thomas Abbt, Justus Möser, Gatterer, and Schlözer.<sup>2</sup> "What then figured in Germany as culture-history was certainly meagre enough ;" and Voltaire and Montesquieu in particular created a universal impression. And as to the force of the French influence on the study of science in general, the most conclusive evidence is forthcoming from the German historian Biedermann,<sup>3</sup> whose testimony is important enough on more grounds than one to deserve translating here at some length :—

"It would argue a false national vanity were we to deny that our Fatherland at the beginning of the eighteenth century stood behind most of its neighbours in respect of originality of invention and independence of research, and needed some time before it could come into line with them. It had to yield in classical studies to the Dutch, and in the natural sciences and the higher mathematics not only to these but to the French, the English, and the Italians. Against the epoch-making discoveries of Huygens, Harvey, Mariotte, Torricelli, and others, it could point to nothing of equal importance as being wholly its own. The few eminent investigators whom it possessed in this department owed a great, if not the greater, part of their scientific achievements to the seminal influence of one or other of the countries named. Guericke had made his scientific studies at Leyden. Count Tschirnhausen, as his whole culture and way of life show, belonged much more to Holland and France than to Germany. It was on the physiological

<sup>1</sup> *Geschichte der deutschen Literatur*, ii. 463 a.

<sup>2</sup> *Kritische Geschichte*, S. 277, 325.

<sup>3</sup> *Deutschland im Achtzehnten Jahrhundert*, Leipzig, ii. 193-198.

discoveries of Harvey that the famous 'Polyhistor' Conring based his medical lectures at Helmstadt.<sup>1</sup> Even the genius of Leibnitz was indebted for its strongest impulses towards philosophical speculation to Bacon, Descartes, Campanella—in fine, to non-Germans; and to London and Parisian savans for initiation into the higher mathematics, as well as for many new lights on the deep things of physics and chemistry.<sup>2</sup> The *Acta Eruditorum*, the first learned journal in Germany, was avowedly an imitation of the *Journal des Savans*, the *Philosophical Transactions*, and the *Giornale dei Letterati*; and as already the Society of Naturalists who in 1651 assembled in Schweinfurt was apparently formed after the example of the Gresham College, founded six years earlier in England, so did the Parisian Academy and the London Society of Sciences serve as encouragement to and model for the erection of similar institutions in Germany. And, finally, the observatories erected at Paris and Greenwich in the second half of the seventeenth century surpassed by far the older ones at Cassel and Uranienburg, and remained throughout the eighteenth century the centre of all astronomical observation.<sup>3</sup>

"Not otherwise was it in the sphere of the social sciences. It was on the ideas of Grotius and Hobbes that the founders of natural law in Germany, Pufendorf, Thomasius, and others, based their systems;<sup>4</sup> though with many modifications and improvements. The economic theories which Pufendorf and Leibnitz recommend as something new to their countrymen,—above all the ground principle that a people should not allow the raw material which they raised to leave the country, but should manufacture it themselves<sup>5</sup>—had long been reduced to practice in England, and had given the last blow to the German Hansa. And when Conring laid the basis of public statistics in Germany, when Leibnitz included the promotion of this study among the functions of the Berlin Academy which he founded, both were only following in the footsteps of the French, who since Richelieu had carried on comprehensive and valuable labours in this department, and the English, who had already made fruitful attempts at drawing up mortality statistics and towards the establishment of a special office for statistical purposes.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Jöcher, *Gelehrten-lexicon*; Göbel, *Leben Conrings*.

<sup>2</sup> Guhrauer, *Leibnitz*, i. 29, 113, 125.

<sup>3</sup> Whewell, *Hist. Induct. Sciences*, i.

<sup>4</sup> Pufendorf himself avows this in the preface to his *De iure naturae et gentium*.

<sup>5</sup> Pufendorf *De officio hominis et civis*, B. ii., k. 11; Leibnitz (Rössler MSS.) in several places.

<sup>6</sup> Wachler, *Handbuch der Geschichte der Litteratur*, iv. 144. Leibnitz, in an essay on the establishment of Academies (Rössler MSS.), expressly recommends that there be connected with the Academy a 'House of Intelligence' and the

"There were two principal causes which for a long time kept the progress of German science and invention in the shadow as compared with other countries; the lack of public encouragement to the originators of great discoveries, and a certain practical awkwardness on the part of these in bringing their theoretically right and fruitful ideas to bear on life and to turn them to account. Both were unhappy results of the Thirty Years' War, which had not only weakened the general judgment and deprived its strongholds, the Free Towns, of the greater part of their power and influence, but at the same time impaired and almost destroyed the instinct of direct and confident comity and intercourse in the nation.<sup>1</sup> Leibnitz complained that 'among all nations Germany alone is so stupid as not to recognise and support her own great men, and that she first learns to esteem them when she has had her attention drawn to their worth by the voices of other nations.'<sup>2</sup> He complained that for lack of such support and encouragement 'the best *ingenia* in Germany are either ruined or turn to other potentates, who well know what this gain means, and

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compilation of 'Bills of Mortality;' and points to the example of France, where such 'State-tables' (as he calls them) had been prepared for the King. It is not unknown to me that already some statistical inquiries had taken place in Prussia at the instigation of the Elector, and also very comprehensive and well-planned ones under the personal supervision of Ernest the Pious in Thuringia (cp. Brückner, *Denkwürdigkeiten zur Gesch. Frankens und Thüringens*, Heft ii.). But the fact that these practical native undertakings had escaped the eye of one so observant of everything new as Leibnitz, and that he only took note of what happened abroad, proves how extremely dependent German science was at the time on that of foreign countries.

<sup>1</sup> [On this important matter of the effects of the Thirty Years' War, see p. 185 of work now cited, and Biedermann's able book on *Deutschlands Trübste Zeit*, in the *Deutsche National-Bibliothek*. Cp. Baring-Gould's *Germany Past and Present* (1881), pp. 438-441. Kurz, *Geschichte der Deutschen Literatur*, ii. 459-460; and Freytag, *Pictures of German Life*, first series, Eng. tr., vol. ii., particularly ch. iii.; and second series, introd., and pp. 84, 137, 212, etc. Kurz notes that "the disregard of the learned for the native literature was so great that even in 1761 Abbt could write that in Rinteln there was nobody who had heard the names of Ramler, Moses Mendelssohn, and Lessing" (461 b). On the want of comity and cordiality, even in the eighteenth century, compare Freytag, second series, vol. i., pp. 276-7, 280 (as to gloom), 293 (as to roads), 296, 300, 304, 307 (as to intercourse), 303 (as to sentiment), 305-6 (as to character). Freytag, with German facility of generalisation, decides in the same chapter (p. 283) that about 1750 "a manly, firm, and independent spirit is to be found pervading all classes," and (p. 305) that "the steadfast enduring power of will, which we honour as man's highest quality, was then very rare in Germany." He and Kurz alike must of course be read with caution.—J.M.R.]

<sup>2</sup> *Leibnitii Opp. omn.* v. 349.



who draw to themselves the best subjects from all parts.' He complained that when anything was invented in Germany, 'the other nations were able immediately to apply it, to extend it, and to perfect it, and sent it back to Germany so developed that they were unable to recognise it as their own.'<sup>1</sup>

"And he had grounds for such complaints. Had he not been obliged, in order to bring Kunkel's important discovery [of phosphorus] to due notice, to publish it in the Memoirs of the French Academy of Sciences!<sup>2</sup> Had he not in his own person found that his eager labours for the establishment of academies, as organs for reanimating the national genius and for the support of public undertakings, were frustrated in Dresden by the frivolity of a court which had hundreds of thousands ready for a single feast, but not so much as hundreds for science and its representatives—were frustrated in Vienna by the influence of the Jesuits, and in Berlin bore fruit only slowly and sparsely.<sup>3</sup> Most of the German courts had to do with quite other matters than the promotion of science or the employment of mechanical talent; and the same great scholar complained of the nobility and other rich people in Germany 'that they are not so curious for knowledge as the English, nor such lovers of reason and instructive conversation as the Italians, but are too much given to eating and drinking.'<sup>4</sup>

"Under such circumstances it was no wonder that the clearest heads in Germany, who at home almost always lacked the necessary support and encouragement for the realisation of their ideas, continually took their inventions abroad, where they were properly appreciated, or were deprived of the fruits of their researches by foreign rivals, whose greater practical dexterity, and the lively encouragement they had from their surroundings, enabled them to take to themselves the fame and the real advantage of such discoveries, to the injury of the German discoverer. The records of the academies of Paris, London, and even St Petersburg enriched themselves with the scientific labours of German savans—of a Tschirnhausen, of a Leibnitz, of the Bernouillis, Euler, and others—because even after the establishment of the Berlin Society there lacked the opportunity of an effective publication in Germany, the means to that end being far too sparingly doled to the Society under both of the first kings of Prussia.<sup>5</sup> For their part, accordingly, one after another of the leading German savans—the preëminent Leibnitz excepted—turned abroad their

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<sup>1</sup> Leibnitz in the *Bedenkungen von Aufrichtung einer Akademie*.

<sup>2</sup> Guhrauer, *Leibnitz*, i. 198.

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*, ii. 197, 203, 290.

<sup>4</sup> Kössler MSS. in an essay *On the establishment of a Teutophile Society [Deutschliebenden Genossenschaft]*.

<sup>5</sup> Guhrauer, as cited, ii. 266.

activity and the prestige of their famous names for a longer or shorter time. Johann Bernoulli turned to Gröningen; his three sons to St Petersburg; his nephew to Padua; Euler spent the greater part of his life in the Russian capital; Fahrenheit and Albinus carried their stores of science to Holland; Hamberger his to France; and the discoverer of phosphorus, Kunkel, died as body-physician to the king of Sweden at Stockholm. Pufendorf, too, followed the call of the same monarch, discounted, as it would seem, by the conditions of his German home."

To this it should be added that the Protestant refugees from France in the last quarter of the seventeenth century brought new blood into German science, law, and theology alike. In the latter department, Abbadie published at Berlin his once famous "Treatise on the Truth of the Christian Religion," eulogised by Bayle; and Barbeyrac, Des Vignolles, Pelloutier, Beausobre, and Basnage were among his Germanised contemporaries. It was in the French refuge colonies that there was first introduced into Germany that practical study of Roman law which later led up to the great work of Savigny, himself a descendant of a refugee family. French refugee physicians, again, were mainly concerned in founding in 1685 the "Superior College of Medicine" at Berlin; and French refugees founded at Berlin in 1696 the *Nouveau Journal des Savants*. Among the names of refugees and sons of refugees who then and later advanced science in Germany are De Béguelin, d'Anières, and Lambert, and these were followed by the more famous men of science welcomed by Frederick—Maupertuis, d'Alembert, la Mettrie. As for the Berlin Academy of Sciences and Literature, though native jealousy at first tended to exclude the French immigrants, it became so thoroughly Gallicised under Frederick the Great that its very transactions were for long carried on in French. This was largely effected by the work of the refugee Formey, who became perpetual secretary of the Academy. French was, in fact, *the* literary and scientific language of Berlin at that epoch; Leibnitz had chosen it for his *Theodicée* and his *Nouveaux Essais*; and a number of literary journals were

regularly published in French, doing work which native capacity could not yet accomplish.<sup>1</sup> In fine, the German renaissance last century is one of the standing proofs of the law that the highest intellectual developments tend to arise as a result of the cross-fertilisation of cultures; in particular of the fecundation of a vigorous but backward nation's intelligence by the knowledge of a more cultured one.

I am content to leave the truth of Buckle's view to be estimated in the light of these records. His proposition as to the influence of the "French intellect" on the German is seen to be justified all along the line. It was his wont to see such questions broadly; and when he spoke of the intellect of a time he thought not merely of the imaginative writers, however great, but of the whole movement and ferment of thought. He could see, what Vorländer does not, that even the imaginative literature of an age is the product not merely of its æsthetic but of its philosophic culture; and that if Lessing and Herder, Goethe and Schiller, drank deeply at the fountain of Shakspeare, their minds were none the less vitally fructified by the universally persuasive ideas of the Montesquieus, the Rousseaus, the Mablys, the Voltaires, the Diderots, the Raynals, and the encyclopædists, who give its most distinctive tone and temper to the Europe of the generation before the French Revolution. These facts he would assuredly have made clear had he lived to write his third volume.

Nor is it to be doubted that he would have drawn from German history many a vivid illustration of his sociological principles. He would have had no difficulty in seeing how that separation of class cultures on which he laid stress was part of the survival at once of feudalism and of provincialism under the distracted conditions of

<sup>1</sup> See Weiss's *History of the French Protestant Refugees*, Eng. trans, 1854, pp. 116-122, 138-148, 151-156. Compare Goldsmith, *On the Present State of Polite Learning*, ch. iv. It is to be noted that the French immigration aided the whole civilisation of Prussia, affecting trade and commerce as well as literature and science; and that in the Seven Years' War Frederick had the aid of no fewer than nine generals of French extraction (Weiss, as cited, p. 153).

German political history ;<sup>1</sup> and how modern bureaucratism has perpetuated the results of mediæval disunion. But the work is left to the Germans themselves.

#### § 6. *Spanish History.*

It is unnecessary to delay long over Herr Vorländer's objections to Buckle's section on Spain. Coming after those already dealt with, they begin to set up a suspicion of carping. Without any attempt to estimate the general value of Buckle's survey, the critic strains himself to make out some error :—

“ Here also [in regard to Spain] Ruge protests against the accuracy of the asserted facts, as regards the superstition and the intellectual culture of the Spaniards at the present day. On that head, the decline of Spain in the seventeenth and eighteenth century can by no means be so simply explained by superstition : there arise for consideration in that connection manifold causes and conditions, which to examine here would carry us too far. A main part of these undoubtedly lies in the suppression of popular freedom by the Government in the sixteenth century ; and this again became possible on the one hand through the partition of the country into many kingdoms, and the dissension between the different states and the cities ; and, on the other hand, through the overwhelming power of the Spanish Government, which chance<sup>1</sup> to be extended over several important European States.”<sup>2</sup>

Save for the endorsement of Ruge's demurrer as to the present condition of Spain, there is really nothing here that clashes with Buckle's exposition. He showed how, by the identification of the national creed with the national cause, the deep-rooted superstition and the loyalty of Spain, combining and strengthening each other, made a fatally subordinate people, the Inquisition serving to cut out all that was most independent and enquiring in the national mind ; and how a nation so castrated and subor-

<sup>1</sup> Förster (*Die Höfe und Cabinette Europa's*, as cited, iii. 279), points out very concisely how the use of French as the language of the courts, and of Latin as the language of the learned, kept the mass of people sundered from both the courtly and the learned classes. He notes that the latter had a *Lateinische Zeitung*, published at Leipzig, as late as the beginning of this century.

<sup>2</sup> S. 507-8.

minated must needs sink in strength and status as soon as incompetent leaders followed on competent. What is more, he pointed out what Herr Vorländer's explanation takes no note of, how in the eighteenth century the great and beneficent reign of Charles III. was followed by a general relapse to the old state of things, by reason of the sheer inanition to which the general intelligence of the people had been reduced by the antecedents, and by the dominion of the Church. It might have been well if he had dealt with the specific question whether the destroying activity of the Inquisition for centuries had not actually so impoverished the national stock that centuries were needed to let it recuperate. He might also have considered the question whether the possession of the gold and silver mines of the New World was not a bane that—even apart from its stimulation of militarism, which he rightly specified—would have economically undone any nation in the same period, in the then state of economic thought, as it demoralised Spain. But he does indicate a multitude of other *veræ causæ* of the Spanish decadence, and does not, as Herr Vorländer would imply, simply explain all the phenomena by the word "superstition." Vorländer's suggestion of the "manifold causes" which he has not time to specify, is really open to harder charges than he throws at Buckle.

As to the present or recent state of culture in Spain, the question is one of shades of characterisation. Buckle went too far when he declared that "the idea of liberty is extinct, if indeed, in the true sense of the word, it ever can be said to have existed;"<sup>1</sup> and again when he declared that the "reverence for antiquity, and an inordinate tenacity of old opinions, old beliefs, and old habits," "are now, comparatively speaking, extinct, except in Spain." It was plainly an exaggeration to say that "while Europe is ringing with the noise of intellectual achievements" of every description, "Spain sleeps on, untroubled, unheeding, impassive, receiving no im-

<sup>1</sup> III. 593.

pressions from the rest of the world, and making no impressions upon it." Such absolute isolation could not and did not exist. In writing the section on Spain, in fact, while struck perhaps more than ever with the luminous breadth of Buckle's exposition and the certainty of his grasp, we cannot but feel that the note of nervous excitement in his style is stronger than ever. While he brought out this, the last published portion of his unfinished book, his health was rapidly worsening, and the unstrung state of his physique expresses itself in the increasing tendency to rhetorical vehemence. Had he lived longer, with an improved health, he would doubtless have recognised that this fashion of slumping all the elements of a nation's life together and personalising the preponderating tendency as "she," is not scientific, and is inconsistent with his own method. Had he lived to see the revolutions of 1868 and 1873, he must needs have admitted that his picture of an absolutely impassive Spain was untrue. But even here, a final estimate leaves him the credit of substantial rightness. The Spanish revolutions which have occurred since his death still bear out by their unsuccess, by the limitation of their scope, by their failure to develop national resources, the general truth of his estimate that Spain had drunk deeper of the cup of inertia than any country in Western Europe. He was wrong in representing the Spanish people as outside the movement of Western progress. He was right in insisting that they have thus far been the least affected by it; and he laid his finger on the true causes.

#### § 7. *Causes of the French Revolution.*

The longest and the most careful section of Vorländer's study is that which deals with the French Revolution; and it is perhaps more instructive to follow him here than elsewhere. But he begins badly enough, accusing Buckle of overlooking what Buckle fully dealt with, and misunderstanding what he discusses:—

"It is recognised by all the more important historians of the French Revolution that the advanced literature of the eighteenth century had

a deep-reaching influence upon that event, but the question is, What influence? Science has the question to answer, What position does the influence of the revolutionary literature take in relation to the essential collective causes of the French Revolution? This or any similar question, however, Buckle has neither asked nor answered. . . . The idea which, according to Buckle, ruled the period, expresses very vaguely the tendency of the intellectual movement (*Aufklärung*), for what could an 'inferiority of the inner world to the outer' signify? By the inner world we can understand only the world of feeling, of moral and religious ideas. Such a one, however, did not exist in the spirit of the French thinkers, and, if it existed, would not have subordinated<sup>1</sup> itself to the outer world. Nor is the closer connection which exists between scientific studies and political life in the least cleared up by the reflection that both pertain to the outer world. Let us, however, pass over minor details and come to the main point. Has Buckle really proved that, in accordance with his doctrine of intellectual laws, it was the discoveries of science and their propagation among the people that overthrew the State and its institutions? How, then, did knowledge attain to this active destructive power? The inner connection which, according to him, exists between scientific research and social discontent, is not made clearer by the remark that both proceed from the same restless spirit. If such an objectless unrest and such vague ideas of progress as the natural sciences are wont to generate, carry discontent in them, we are moved to wonder that the many Halls of Science possessed by Germany have not also become Temples of Democracy. A precise inner relation between the love of science and the Revolution can be demonstrated as little by philosophers as by historians—for the influence of knowledge on action is mediate, slow, general, and not traceable in particular forms."<sup>2</sup>

"Not that," Vorländer continues, "we here mean to deny the mediate influence of science on a Revolution prepared in other ways. How would a public resistance to the government and the aristocracy be possible without an educated upper-middle class?" Herr Vorländer does not agree with Granier de Cassagnac and von Sybel that scientific doctrines and political theories were restricted to a small circle; pointing out how ideas spread in Paris, and citing de Tocqueville as to their wide vogue before the Revolution, and the extent to which theory overrode

<sup>1</sup> The German word here is *untergeordnet*; and "inferiority," Buckle's word, is translated *Unterordnung*, which does not give the true sense.

<sup>2</sup> S. 512-3.

practical experience. But, he continues, this could at most only excite "dissatisfaction with the state of affairs, and pressing desire for reform," and that cannot suffice to make such a revolution as the French. "The question is, *how theories and wishes developed into revolutionary actions.*" On this, Herr Vorländer admits that the *Aufklärung* might, as Buckle says, strengthen the feeling of despair which slavery engenders, and give rise to a wish for revenge; but here, he objects, further causes of the Revolution are only dimly indicated. On the whole, then, he decides, Buckle's intellectual laws cannot explain the movement of progressive culture-evolution, and still less the special destinies of peoples. "Scientific laws have significance only insofar as they disentangle and fix the precise inner relations of complex phenomena or facts. Indefinite laws are therefore as good as none. But that those set forth by Buckle remain indefinite is apparent on all hands, whether we consider the method by which they were arrived at or their contents."

Now, to begin with, Buckle *did* expressly and fully consider the influence of the pre-revolutionary literature in relation to the collective causes of the Revolution. At the close of his chapter on the Historical Literature of France in the Seventeenth Century, he sums up that Montesquieu and Turgot,

"as well as Voltaire, were the unconscious advocates of the democratic movement, inasmuch as they discountenanced the homage which historians had formerly paid to individuals, and rescued history from being a mere recital of the deeds of political and ecclesiastical rulers. At the same time, Turgot, by the captivating prospects which he held out of future progress, and by the picture which he drew of the capacity of society to improve itself, increased the impatience which his countrymen were beginning to feel against that despotic government in whose presence amelioration seemed to be hopeless. These and similar speculations, which now for the first time appeared in French literature, stimulated the activity of the intellectual classes, cheered them under the persecutions to which they were exposed, and emboldened them to the arduous enterprise of leading on the people to attack the institutions of their native land. Thus it was that in



France everything tended to the same result. Everything indicated the approach of some sharp and terrible struggle. . . ."<sup>1</sup>

And if we grant that even a conscientious critic might overlook this vital passage at the end of a chapter, it is impossible to understand how he could miss the many passages in the next chapter which confirm and extend the proposition cited. Vorländer has substantially missed the point of Buckle's account of the causes of the Revolution. It is that, by reason of the force of the protective spirit in France in the first part of the eighteenth century, the then rising body of critical thinkers turned their whole energy against the Church and Christianity; and that only in the second half of the century did the men of letters begin to criticise the State. About the same time the government began to attack the Church; and it soon overthrew the Jesuits, with the result that Jansenism, the more democratic creed, made headway against Arminianism, the more aristocratic. Their work being partly done, the innovating spirits then began to discuss the State, whose own growing disorders and increasing oppressiveness tended more and more to provoke criticism. At the same time the development of the materialistic philosophy strongly reinforced the new tendency, inasmuch as it substituted the general view that man was a product of Nature for the general view that he was a self-determining soul. It promoted physical science of every kind; and the mental habits of physical science becoming widely prevalent, and the drift of education being altered, the arbitrariness and unreason of the existing political system became more and more flagrant. It was by way of generalisation of this scientific tendency that Buckle put the master idea of the period as that of "the inferiority of the internal to the external."<sup>2</sup> Herr Vorländer, asking what this means, incurs the rejoinder that he had only to read his author in order to ascertain. His remark that the French writers did not possess a "world of feeling, of moral and religious

<sup>1</sup> II. 321.

<sup>2</sup> II. 361.

ideas," can only be described as an unfortunate display of obtuseness.

Again, it is a quite erroneous account of Buckle's chapter on the Proximate Causes of the Revolution to say he teaches that it was scientific propaganda that "overthrew the State and its institutions." These forces were part of the total causation: the rottenness and oppressiveness of the Old Régime itself were equally a part, and are so recognised by Buckle. And he goes further—

" . . . The French Revolution, like every great revolution the world has seen, was preceded by a complete change in the habits and associations of the national intellect. But besides this, there was also taking place, precisely at the same time, a vast social movement, which was intimately connected with the intellectual movement, and indeed formed part of it, in so far as it was followed by similar results and produced by similar causes."<sup>1</sup>

This social change was a great development of love of knowledge throughout society, involving the diffusion of the ideas of the men of science.<sup>2</sup> And here lies the differentiation between the diffusion of scientific ideas and the accumulation of expert knowledge among the few, in the manner of Germany. Herr Vorländer's question was answered in the chapter he was discussing. The proposition that "the hall of science is the temple of democracy" is partly true even of Germany, inasmuch as there too the cultivation of science has set up new standards of merit, undermining those of the old régime, and encouraging new social ties. But in the France of Louis XVI. society was plastic to new influences in a way that drilled and regimented Germany has not been since Jena; and the new habit of hearing lectures, once begun, lent itself to forms of association such as had never existed before. Finally—and here again Herr Vorländer has ignored part of the argument he is criticising—the example

<sup>1</sup> II. 405.

<sup>2</sup> The force and truth of Buckle's explanation on the side of intellectual development become only the clearer when it is put beside M. Rocquain's excellent exposition of the rise of political feeling in his *L'Esprit Révolutionnaire avant la Révolution*.

of the United States gave point and direction to the whole mass of new aspirations and needs. Thus, broadly, it was, that "theories and wishes developed into revolutionary actions." Herr Vorländer's objection is accordingly disposed of.

His disparagement of "indefinite" laws, again, is explicitly anticipated by Buckle, whose defence he here also ignores. "The real objection," says Buckle, "to generalisations respecting the development of the intellect of a nation is, *not that they want certainty, but that they lack precision*. That is just the point at which the historian diverges from the annalist."<sup>1</sup> And this proposition he expanded and made good, intelligibly and intelligently. To Vorländer's specification of a scientific law of social evolution, which shall "fix the precise inner relation of complex phenomena or facts," it seems to me impossible to attach any meaning. He does not seem to have reflected sufficiently on the nature of historical explanation in the broad sense, and he himself offers nothing in the nature of explanation that even pretends to more precision than is reached in those of Buckle.

Vorländer, however, further labours the point of Buckle's view of the causes of the Revolution ; and it is only fair to let the reader see all that he can urge, his being at least the most copious discussion of the subject. The propositions as to the predominance of knowledge-forces, and the restriction of these by the protective spirit, he pronounces to be too vague and trivial to serve for a philosophy of history, or even to find a place therein. If that were the key to the comprehension of history, Voltaire and Condorcet, who possessed it, might have written the history of civilisation once for all. Buckle, indeed, he admits, takes away from the proposition some of its vagueness and triviality by inductively limiting the influence of knowledge to that of the scientific, and especially the physico-scientific order ; but now the doctrine becomes at bottom false, and fails to explain the facts of history, "as is above

<sup>1</sup> II. 325.

demonstrated." Some relative truth there certainly is, the critic again admits, in the proposition that the discoveries of science are the only permanent and progressive influence in a nation's life, knowledge being the only transmissible spiritual possession. Hence the scientific knowledge of one people, transmitted to a later one, becomes the basis of their culture, and so has a world-historical influence which the moral forces cannot attain to. But it does not follow that the moral forces have only a small and transitory importance. They determine the prosperity and bloom of a nation, and their significance is not to be measured by the relative world-historical influence of scientific truths. "For instance, the science of the Greeks had a powerful influence on Christian doctrine and on all later science, but a relatively small one on the progress of the Greek people themselves in civilisation." And then he goes on :

"Not from the standpoint of such a bird's-eye view of abstraction can we attain with the English historico-philosopher to the apotheosis of scientific knowledge, and to his thoroughly unhistorical opinion that the deeds of an Alexander and a Napoleon—which with the apostles of English utilitarian morality he summarily describes as crimes—soon disappear in the great movement of national life. They disappear only from the aforesaid standpoint of abstraction, to which finally all outlines and distinctions of objects become blended; not from that which investigates actual historical life. The former gives us the opinion that the morality of a people remains essentially the same. That, from this standpoint, no other influence of religion is apparent than those of superstition or intellectual emancipation, is natural."<sup>1</sup>

Where the first part of this criticism passes from mere asseveration to illustration—and it is only here it need now be discussed—it really does not confute Buckle in the least: it merely indicates the inexactitude of the critic. The fact that Greek science did not do for the Greeks what it did later in stimulating a subsequent civilisation, is due to the series of countervailing political causes which disintegrated Greece and left it a prey to Macedon and

<sup>1</sup> S. 515-517.

Rome, and finally to the spell of oriental religion organised on Roman lines. It is certainly refreshing, finally, to find a German accusing Buckle of undue devotion to "abstraction." And it is only just to admit that, in the case dealt with, the objection has force. The deeds of an Alexander and a Napoleon do in a sense affect historical life permanently. But there is a sense in which Buckle's proposition is also substantially valid; and if Herr Vorländer had only tried to recognise this sense he would have better vindicated his own historical acumen. As for the point of "moral" progress, it may be better discussed in another chapter, on a fuller criticism.

With at least a notable thoroughness of contradiction, the German critic goes on to challenge yet other details of Buckle's theory of the French Revolution. On the question of the "protective spirit," he summarily decides, without any examination of Buckle's arguments, that protection of the lower classes by the higher is as necessary as protection of the weaker by the stronger within the family; and that what Buckle ought to have done was to examine as to when they went beyond protection and were guilty of oppression<sup>1</sup>—a virtual evasion of Buckle's argument, which was to the effect that all protection, beyond such as the Church gave to poor clients in the early ages, when they could not protect themselves,<sup>2</sup> is paralysing and demoralising in its nature even where it is not recognised as oppressive, inasmuch as it tends to sterilise intelligence and activity. Vorländer does, it is true, go on<sup>3</sup> to lay his finger on what would be a serious defect in Buckle's study of civilisation if he had lived to write his book without curing it, and what, it must be confessed, is a permanent defect in the political doctrine which he in general affected. With the rest of the school of *Laissez-faire*, he seems, so far as he has gone, to overlook the fact that *Laissez-faire* in some directions, and a species of protection in others, have resulted in great diversities of balance of culture in the European States. Thus, as Vorländer points out, and as

<sup>1</sup> S. 517.<sup>2</sup> II. 4, 105.<sup>3</sup> S. 518.

is above observed, the English are relatively backward in intellectual research and the arts, while the most forward in practical activities; the Anglo-Americans exaggerate the tendencies of the English; while the Germans, restricted on the side of practical activity, have gone furthest in systematic mental activity. Vorländer obscures matters by calling their work "science and literature," whereas England is not particularly backward in physical science, and Germany not now particularly forward in *belles lettres*. But the objection holds good in the main: *Laissez-faire* in England left us poverty-stricken in music and drama, and for long in painting, as compared with Germany, where the two former were protected, and with France, where all were. Now, it seems impossible that Buckle should not have fully faced and considered these facts had he lived to write the history of English civilisation. No historian had a more comprehensive grasp than he of all social interests; and his commonplace-books show him keenly alive to the intellectual shortcomings of England in the eighteenth century. How far he might have seen cause to modify his attitude as to protection it is impossible to guess: it certainly does not follow that he would have set down our deficiencies to the inactivity of the protective spirit; though he could hardly deny that some Continental developments (if also some retrogressions) were due to that spirit. The history of our Royal Academy, for one thing, and the history of the Puritan suppression of drama and music, he could fairly enough charge *against* the protective spirit. In any case, he must have faced the problem somehow; and if he had not impartially solved it, he would to that extent have failed. As a matter of fact, the course of events has proved him to have overstated the incapacity for self-government resulting in the French people from the long predominance of a bureaucratic system among them. He overstates the "stability" of English government, which is a matter of the peculiar and gradual withdrawal of the throne from the work of government, and the comparative massiveness of the main political parties,

rather than of any developed faculty in the people. On the other hand, many Frenchmen have gone nearly as far as Buckle in lamenting the centralisation of their administrative system; and there has actually been a measure of reaction against it, and of return towards local autonomy, since 1870. But, in view of the fact that the conflicting theories of Individualism and Socialism are grappling in every European country, it would be out of place here to do more than indicate how Buckle stood on that issue in 1860. His position is not to be disposed of by the dictum of Herr Vorländer.

#### § 8. *Moral Forces in the French Revolution.*

Returning to that critic's discussion of Buckle's theory of the French Revolution, we find that for his own part he points to two of what he considers the most important causes :—

"... that of the unproductive administrative consumption, or economic distress, and that of the abasement and impoverishment (*Verkümmerung*) of the higher culture-functions of religion and science. The economic resources of the people were under Louis XIV., through the prolonged wars of aggression, thoroughly exhausted and in large part destroyed. Under the Regency and under Louis XV. the monstrous disproportion between the national production and consumption was still further increased by the shameless prodigality of the court and of the upper classes. The necessary result was economic exhaustion, an ever deeper decline of the productive forces of a large part of the population, and the frightful destitution of the lower classes. This evil, affecting the whole body social, must needs wax from year to year, and no arts of finance could work a cure or even amelioration. In addition to this laming of the activity of the people on the economic and political side, *came now (sic)* the bondage and corruption (*Unfreiheit und Corruption*) of the people on the side of religion and science. The Church, with the help of the Government, had succeeded in previous centuries in fettering the free exercise of religious belief and of science; but the enslaved spirit of the people, driven back upon itself and stimulated from England, had in the course of the eighteenth century come to be conscious of its natural right to freedom, with the result that, in the corruption of society and the struggle against spiritual and political oppres-

sion, all respect for the higher powers and all knowledge of their true significance was lost. Thus in various ways the interactive inner dissolution and corruption were the germs not only of a political but also of an ecclesiastical and social revolution, whereby is essentially defined the character of the French cataclysm of 1789. If we ask what were the special sources (*Grundursache*) of this dissolution and corruption, there can be no doubt that we have to seek them particularly in the monstrous century-long lasting violation of the moral and natural laws of right. The question here is not of immorality or licence in the ordinary sense, though these also certainly tended to the ruin of the people's strength, but of the immeasurable sloth and selfishness of the ruling classes, for it was these things that lay at the bottom of the frivolous levity, the silly infatuation, the obduracy to justice and truth, the inurement to injustice and falsehood, which prevailed in the *ancien régime*. In these original causes were rooted also the forces of dissolution and corruption, which together produced the Revolution. *This was the world-judgment of world-history, which expressed its sentence in the act of destruction; it allowed the old régime itself to set up by its actions those forces which overthrew it in the Revolution: hate and embitterment, selfishness, licence, irreligion, and the demoralisation of a one-sided, frivolous scepticism.*"<sup>1</sup>

It is difficult to gather how far Herr Vorländer supposed himself here to be controverting Buckle. He has given as the gist of his own account of the causes of the Revolution, "the century-long lasting violation of the moral and natural laws of right." But Buckle took these antecedents for granted. He repeatedly notes that the policy of Louis XIV. had "reduced the country to the brink of ruin";<sup>2</sup> and, generalising the misgovernment from Louis XIV. onwards, set himself to show how a revolution which in the reign of Louis XV. might have been averted by reforms and concessions, could not even be delayed in the reign of Louis XVI. His chapter deals with "*Proximate Causes*," not with primary causes. The fact of the misgovernment he did not think it necessary to prove in detail: that "the upper classes, intoxicated by the long possession of power, had provoked the crisis,"<sup>3</sup> he took as a datum, and he broadly subsumed the modes of the misgovernment as results of the system of "Protection." And this course is clearly more scientific than it is to include the economic exhaus-

<sup>1</sup> S. 521-2.<sup>2</sup> II. 418.<sup>3</sup> II. 259.



tion of France under Louis XIV. among the causes of the revolution under Louis XVI. Such economic exhaustion could have been soon cured under a system such as that urged and locally applied by Turgot; and if the fact of the old exhaustion were a "proximate" cause of Revolution, it ought to have made for revolution under Louis XIV. Buckle puts the economic exhaustion as part of "the immense injury which the interference of government had produced on the material interests of the country."<sup>1</sup> The only substantial difference between his generalisation and Vorländer's, so far as the latter goes, is that Vorländer puts the "sloth and selfishness" of the aristocracy "at the bottom" of their misconduct—the old fallacy of explaining the fact in terms of itself. An aristocracy thus acts selfishly in virtue of its selfishness, as opium is soporific in respect of its dormitive virtue. In the end, it will be seen, the critic merely reiterates one of Buckle's summaries, as if that were a confutation.

And this is the effect of the remainder of his criticism. He goes on, after pointing to the general hatred that had grown up towards the Government, to speak of the philosophers, praising them on the one hand as Buckle did, and on the other blaming their recklessness and levity pretty much as Buckle deplored their hostility to Christianity. He is here open to the same criticism as befalls Buckle, but in a much greater degree. Buckle described the attacks of the men of letters on Christianity as a "serious error," without dealing for a moment with the issue which ought to be settled before such a judgment could be pronounced—namely, whether Christianity is true. It can be inferred from various passages that Buckle himself had no belief in it as a supernatural revelation;<sup>2</sup> and in that case he had no right to use the language he did, which savours much more of the diplomacy of the average English public

<sup>1</sup> II. 327.

<sup>2</sup> II. 256, 478; i. 180, *note*. The statement as to his indicating a belief (cited by Mr Huth, *Life*, ii. 225) dates from the time of his rapid decline in health, and is in any case self-contradictory. Contrast p. 204.

man than of his normal courage and directness. Apart from this, however, he expressly admitted<sup>1</sup> that "what is most blamed in the great French writers was the natural consequence of the development of their age." Vorländer, while rejecting Buckle's description of the deeds of Napoleon as "crimes," takes up an exactly equivalent moral attitude towards the literary men of the previous generation. If there is ever a case in which blame of old actions is historically relevant, it is in such a one as that of Napoleon, where blame is the assertion of an advanced ethic as against the still common tendency to sink ethical considerations altogether in dealing with a military genius. But to declaim against the "levity" of the men of letters of a generation in which such men were systematically denied all scope for serious criticism, and at the same time to deprecate censure of a Napoleon—this is to pass a judgment that is not only irrelevant but obtuse, and one that is not only obtuse but immoral. To such misadventures may the determined moralist come, when he is also a determined pragmatist.

And that Herr Vorländer is a pragmatist is the decision to which we are irresistibly led in finishing his essay. In conclusion, forgetful of his demand that Buckle should explain how aspiration became translated into action, Vorländer decides that "as regards the second point, the complete forcible destruction of the *ancien régime*, the causes of that are essentially no other than those of the dissolution."<sup>2</sup> In fine, the general alienation of feeling from the Government grew to a conviction that the old *régime* was incurable, and a revolution necessarily resulted. The nobility and clergy promoted it at the start by *their* resistance to the Government's policy of reform; and later, all royalist efforts were frustrated by the weakness of the king. Finally, the revolution went from bad to worse, as the passions of lower and lower classes successively came into play. "Enough has been said to indicate, on one hand, that there are real causes for the

<sup>1</sup> II. 257.

<sup>2</sup> S. 525.

greatest popular convulsions, of which not the smallest idea could be derived from the abstract civilisation-theory of Buckle; and to bring into fuller recognition the deep significance of moral forces on the development and the destiny of a people. This recognition has, however, gone so far in Germany that we are not afraid of Buckle's theory producing in this regard a scientific revolution." <sup>1</sup> This is perhaps a little worse than pragmatic, inasmuch as Herr Vorländer has not indicated a single "real cause" that was not specified by Buckle, unless we are to agree with him that a social cause is specified when wrongdoing is defined as a result of moral badness, and insurrection as a result of the acquired disposition to rebel. These are but the natural forms of protest of the sermonising sociologist when he finds his province invaded by the scientising sociologist. And that is the valuation that must be put on Herr Vorländer's hostile summing-up, as apart from the two or three cases in which he has made a valid specific criticism. He agrees with Buckle that the influence of knowledge and its diffusion on modern civilised nations is far more comprehensive than is commonly recognised; but we cannot, he thinks, attain right results on Buckle's lines.

"We can learn much from his books, but not, as his translator supposes, heightened respect for true history, for it is into only a single portion (*stück*) of culture-history that we are led; and he does not press on from this into the inner correlations of the life of peoples. Science, on the contrary, will not undervalue the moral forces and gains of the national life, and especially will not undervalue Religion and the State. Superficially considered, these may serve the ends of isolated parties, who set up as the whole national and political life the so-called opinions of the people, which are really only those of certain classes thereof. But science, at least that of the German people, will not let itself be shut up in such a narrow sphere."

So that if Buckle had a supra-scientific faith in the capacity of free England, Herr Vorländer has an equal confidence in that of scientific Germany. German historical science, he admits, has need to free itself from a certain

<sup>1</sup> S. 526-7.

aristocratic bias to State politics, courts, etc., and to ground itself on the inner correlation of the national life. But truly democratic history, he concludes, will deal, if not with equal love, then impartially and justly, with all classes.<sup>1</sup> Doubtless it will, one day. But it cannot be said that thus far German optimism is any more than English justified of its children. The ideal history of civilisation is yet to come; and in a Germany represented on the right hand by Mommsen and Gneist, and on the left by the Social Democrats, the perfect wisdom is still so much *in posse* that perchance the German genius might after all profit up to a certain point by Buckle in the meantime.

It does not appear, at all events, that Herr Vorländer has disposed of the Introduction to the History of Civilisation in England. I have given more space to the examination of his criticism than to any other writer's, by way of giving the fullest hearing to one of the fullest replies to Buckle. The survey, it is to be hoped, is not quite unprofitable; but though it has involved some corrections of errors on Buckle's side, it is perhaps more important as serving to show that an elaborate and deliberate attack on his work by a systematic opponent leaves its main positions unshaken.

<sup>1</sup> S. 527.

## CHAPTER VII.

### SOME CHARGES OF IGNORANCE.

#### § 1. SIR HENRY MAINE'S. *Concerning Hindu Foods.*

WE have thus far seen something of the random and the reasoned detraction that has pursued Buckle: it may be well at this stage to take note of a few precise impeachments of his work on matters of detail. One naturally thinks first, in this connection, of the fling of Sir Henry Maine in his Rede Lecture on "The Effect of Observation of India on Modern European Thought." Maine seems to have caught at a current objection, for the criticism he makes had been advanced many years before by the *Quarterly* reviewer of Buckle's first volume,<sup>1</sup> in very much the same spirit, and to equally little purpose. The passage in Maine's lecture runs—

"There is a good instance of the common limitation of English ideas about India to its coast in a work which was famous in our own day. Mr Buckle, in the General Introduction to his 'History of Civilisation,' has derived all the distinctive institutions of India and the peculiarities of its people *from their consumption of rice*. From the fact, he tells us, that the exclusive food of the natives of India is of an oxygenous rather than a carbonaceous character, it follows by an inevitable law that caste prevails, that oppression is rife, that rents are high, and that custom and law are stereotyped. The passage ought to be a caution against overbold generalisation; for it unfortunately happens that *the ordinary food of the people of India is not rice*. It" [*i.e.*, the rice, not the 'ordinary food'] "is a product of the coast, growing in the deltas of great rivers, and only at one point of the country extending any distance inland."<sup>2</sup>

The italics are mine. Let us see how the statement in general, and that point in particular, compare with what

<sup>1</sup> July 1858.

<sup>2</sup> Lecture cited (1875), pp. 13, 14.

Buckle actually said, and with the facts. Buckle's statement is to this effect. In India the heat enforces an oxygenous diet, which naturally tends to be taken from the vegetable and not the animal world. On account of the heat, again, this must be something not needing arduous labour to produce, and copious in its yield; and rice, "from the earliest period the most general food in India," satisfies all these conditions. In the south of the peninsula, where "*rice is not so much used as formerly*, it has been replaced . . . by another grain called ragi," which, "considering its importance, has been strangely neglected by botanical writers"; and "in the large cities, millet is generally used; of which 'a quantity sufficient for two meals may be purchased for about a halfpenny.'" "The original rice, however," adds Buckle, "is so suited to the circumstances I have described that it is still the most general food of nearly all the hottest countries of Asia." In support of these assertions he gives, as usual, whole paragraphs of references; and he adds a further footnote, roughly sketching the history of the distribution of rice. Cheap and abundant food, then, makes a redundant labour market: and the upper classes become enormously rich, and the lower miserably poor. Hence oppression, and the extreme degradation of the multitude; an impassable social gulf being created. A similar induction is made out in the cases of Egypt, Mexico, and Peru; and the system of castes is shown to have existed in these countries as in India (virtually in Mexico, legally in Peru); being, with the reverence for antiquity, a natural result of "that stationary and conservative spirit which . . . has marked every country in which the upper classes have monopolised power."<sup>1</sup>

Against this argument, it will be seen, Maine's fling was futile to the point of puerility, even if Buckle had erred in his statement about the consumption of rice. The thesis does not depend on the form but on the nature and abundance of the food discussed; and he merely notes the

<sup>1</sup> I. 70-115.

consumption of rice in India as he does that of dates and dhourra in Egypt, and maize and bananas in Mexico and Peru. But he had not erred even in detail, since he actually particularised the other Indian foods. And rice *has* been the "most general" food of the people of India. Indeed, such an authority as Brand and Cox's Dictionary, standard in its day, mentions no other. The language of Elphinstone on the subject is altogether misleading, partly by reason of changes made since he wrote, partly by reason of loose phrasing. He asserts that "the *principal* food of the people of Hindostan is *wheat*, and in the Deckan, *jowár and bájra* : rice, as a *general* article of subsistence, is confined to Bengal and parts of Behár, with the low country along the sea *all round the coast* of the Peninsula ; in most parts of India it is only used as a luxury. In the southern part of the table-land of the Deckan the body of the people live on a small and poor grain called *ragi*."<sup>1</sup> Yet he goes on to admit<sup>2</sup> that "*bájra* and *jowár* are almost as much consumed as wheat in Hindostan," and that "rice is more or less raised *all over India* in favourable situations." Thus Elphinstone used the word "general" in a special and somewhat forced sense ; and his description of wheat as the "principal" food of India is still more forced. Whatever may have been the precise figures in his day, the official statement<sup>3</sup> is that in 1890-91 the acreage of Indian crops (apart from Bengal, where rice is admittedly the main food) was as follows :—Rice, 27,840,984 acres ; wheat, 20,187,963 acres ; *other food grains*, 76,655,674 acres. So that Buckle's statements still hold good ; and the much greater yield of rice makes it perforce a more "general" food than wheat in quantity, as it is in local distribution. It is eaten in places where it is not grown. On my once putting the point to an experienced and observant Anglo-Indian, he rapidly indicated the food distribution on the map, calculating that rice was eaten by two-thirds of the people ; and attributing

<sup>1</sup> *History of India* (ed. 1857), p. 7.

<sup>2</sup> P. 9.

<sup>3</sup> *Statesman's Year-Book* (1893), p. 137.

Sir Henry Maine's very inexact statement to his merely partial Indian experience. But the matter need not rest on such authority: the reader can satisfy himself by turning to Balfour's "Cyclopædia of India," article "Rice." It is Sir Henry Maine who is ignorant and inaccurate as to rice distribution. "In India, generally, rice is produced *in every variety of soil, at every altitude, and in every latitude.*"<sup>1</sup> What is true is that in our own time the labouring population, especially in the south, as Buckle mentioned, lives mainly on other grains; but even among these rice is eaten. "Throughout the greater part of British India and China, rice is preferred as food by nearly all classes."<sup>2</sup> . . . But it is essentially the food of the well-to-do classes. The races of *northern* India . . . prefer wheat; and in India the millets and pulses form the food-grains of *all the labouring people*, with whom rice is a luxury."<sup>3</sup> The words italicised are loose, for the same article tells that in Southern India the people so much prefer rice that "it indicates their well-to-do or impoverished condition by their telling that they can have rice twice or only once daily, or once weekly."<sup>4</sup> Then, "In Kashmir rice is the staple of cultivation"; and "The exclusive culture of rice in Ganjam, Cuttack, and northwards into Lower Bengal has been a cause of much misery, . . . and Mr Thornhill in 1872 counselled the partial culture of other cereals." In Further India and China, again, "rice is the chief grain food," as it is the "main aliment of the Siamese poor," and in Cochin-China is the "staff of life."<sup>5</sup> It would appear, though as to this I cannot speak with certainty, that the spread of the millets in India is

<sup>1</sup> *Cycl. of India*, 3rd ed., iii. 418.

<sup>2</sup> Compare W. E. Dhanakoti Raju, M.D., *Elements of Hygiene*, Madras, 1875, pp. 65-6: "Rice . . . has from time immemorial constituted the principal food of the populations of China, India, and the islands in their vicinity."

<sup>3</sup> *Cyclopædia* as cited, p. 414.

<sup>4</sup> Compare Dr Dhanakoti on the "remarkable" preference given to rice, p. 68.

<sup>5</sup> So also in Burma.



comparatively modern, and is especially associated with the influence of British industrialism. In any case, it is remarkable that Buckle's one real blunder in the matter—one of his few blunders in matters of fact—as to the nutritive value of rice,<sup>1</sup> is overlooked by his critic (it was noted and exclaimed at by the *Quarterly* reviewer) who would certainly have dwelt on it had he detected it. But the serious matter is the perversion of the argument. To what conclusion can we come but that Maine spoke uncandidly as well as inaccurately,<sup>2</sup> moved by his intense aversion to everything democratic?

<sup>1</sup> Rice, he says (i. 70-1) "is the most nutritive of all the cerealia," giving only the insufficient authority of Mrs Somerville's *Physical Geography* (ed. 1851, ii. 202), a work known to be abundant in inaccuracies. The error appears, however, to have had doctrinal currency at the time, though the *Quarterly* reviewer scouted it. Thus the article on Rice in the 8th ed. of the *Encyc. Brit.* states that "rice is second in importance only to wheat as an article of human food"; and the standing article in *Chambers' Encyc.* before 1890 puts it that "according to the prevalent views of modern chemists" rice contains "a smaller amount of *flesh-forming* substances, and a larger amount of *fat-forming* or *heat-giving* substances than any other grain." Lewes (*Physiol. of Common Life*, 1859, i. 83) is emphatic as to the "chaotic condition" of the then current chemical doctrine of food. Writing after Buckle, he points out (p. 84) that "although Dr Forbes Watson's elaborate investigations have dispelled the very general notion of rice forming the *entire* bulk of the diet of the inhabitants of the East, they also give an unequivocal refutation of the chemical theory of Food." The insufficiency of rice, he declares (p. 85), "is only one among a series of facts which prove that man cannot flourish on *one* kind of food. Pulses are even worse than rice when eaten alone." In recent and revised editions of Mrs Somerville's book, the old statement is reversed; rice being stated to contain "less nutritious matter" than any of the cerealia (7th ed., 1877, pp. 409-10). Compare Dr Dhanakoti, *Elements of Hygiene*, pp. 66-67:—"In nutritive value, rice is the lowest of all the cereal grains." "The Indian labourer is obliged to resort to the more nutritive of the cereals in preference to rice."

It is hardly necessary to show that the correction of the chemists' error as to the food value of rice does not in the least invalidate Buckle's line of argument. As Lewes notes (p. 86): "we are at all events certain that rice suffices to sustain the waste and repair of the organism, if not in a very admirable manner." This is what the argument really requires, the fecundity of rice being unquestioned.

<sup>2</sup> I regret to see that Professor Prothero, of Edinburgh University, has lately reiterated Maine's misrepresentation in an even worse and more inexcusable way, in his inaugural lecture (16th October 1894) on the study of history. He writes:—"Now, in the drawing of these conclusions, there is the same dis-

§ 2. The *Quarterly Review's*. Concerning Earthquakes in Italy, &c.

If Maine could be so swayed, better things can hardly be looked for from the ordinary Tory or clerical polemist. The *Quarterly* reviewer of July 1858, a man evidently of considerable reading in some directions, betrays in every page of his article a malice that will hesitate at no possible imputation.<sup>1</sup> Not content with confronting Buckle's statement as to rice with the statement of Elphinstone that "the principal food of the people of Hindostan is wheat, and in the Deckan jowár and bájra," and that rice, "as a general article of subsistence," is confined to certain parts, he proceeds to accuse Buckle of so citing Elphinstone in regard to ragí as to make *him* seem to say that it is a late substitute for rice, when he merely mentions it as the chief food in the south Deckan. The charge is vainly malicious. Buckle gives a mass of testimonies as to the antiquity of rice as a general food in India, and then states that in the south it has been latterly replaced by ragí, here citing Elphinstone in a footnote as one cites an authority whether for the whole or for part of a statement. To believe that Buckle, in giving a reference to a popular work on one point of a general statement for which he had a dozen authorities, wanted to have it

inction between scientific and unscientific work as there is in the ascertainment of historic facts. For instance, Buckle, in illustrating his theory that national character depends largely upon food, attributes the weakness of the Hindoos to an almost exclusive diet of rice. A striking but misleading generalisation, for, as Sir H. Maine has pointed out, *the great majority of the Hindoos never eat rice at all.*" (Lecture cited, printed in *National Review*, Dec. 1894, p. 466). In this amazing string of blunders, Professor Prothero not only attacks Buckle without any real knowledge of Buckle's doctrine, and thus grossly falsifies it, but far outgoes Maine in misstatement of the facts as to Hindu diet, on which he has evidently made no investigation whatever. And all this is in the inaugural discourse of a new professor of history, posing as the advocate of scientific *versus* unscientific methods. When accredited teachers thus unscrupulously join in discrediting a dead thinker without having read him, it seems indeed vain to look for either justice or judgment in the matter from the average publicist.

<sup>1</sup> He was a clergyman. See Buckle's letter to Capel in the *Life*, i. 153.

supposed that the work in question gave testimony on a point on which it was silent—this may be possible to a defender of religion, infuriated by rationalistic propaganda, but can be so to no one else. It is evident that Buckle took the greatest pains to ascertain the facts about ragí, concerning which he complains that it has been “strangely neglected by botanical writers.” He might fitly have complained further that Elphinstone had made no attempt to trace the history of that grain in India.

It is only fair, in examining the reviewer's strictures, to admit that he convicts Buckle of straining somewhat a phrase of Murchison about “credulous farmers,” giving a general force to words used in a particular connection. It is the kind of mistake that may be made by following an extract made in a note-book, in forgetfulness of the original context. But at worst it did but add one strained testimony to an easily proved generalisation; and only the folly of malevolence would point to it as a proof either of bad faith or of general laxity. And only of such folly on his own part does the critic furnish any further proof. Commenting like Parker on Buckle's list of authorities, he makes a very different impression by his comment. The list, he says, “omits some of which the absence, in a work *professing to survey all that has been done in physical and metaphysical science*, is remarkable. Neither Aristotle, Plato, Aquinas, Galileo, Bacon, Newton, or (*sic*) La Place, if they rest upon Mr Buckle's shelves, *appear (sic) ever to have been taken down from them*” (p. 39). Equally felicitous is the attempt to show that Buckle “has not read the books which he quotes” (p. 64), in respect that he had said that the extraordinary contrast of tone between Sir Thomas Browne's *Religio Medici*, written about 1634, and his *Vulgar Errors*, written about 1646, pointed to a great intellectual advance forced on Browne by the movement of his age. The contrast is really a curious and significant one; and Buckle, I believe, was the first to point it out with any emphasis. He might indeed reasonably have raised the question whether Browne

was exactly honest in *publishing* the *Religio Medici* as he did after he had written the *Vulgar Errors*. But the *Quarterly* reviewer, indignant at the suggestion that Browne could have been in any way influenced by "scepticism," points to the passage quoted in Wilkins' Supplementary Memoir from Dr Aikin, with its quotation from Dr Hutchinson, as to Browne having testified to a belief in witches at the famous trial of 1664 before Sir Matthew Hale. Now there can be no doubt, so far as I can discover, that that story is accurate. The name is indeed only given as "Dr Brown of Norwich" in the original report, taken by a person then attending the Court";<sup>1</sup> and Bishop Hutchinson<sup>2</sup> seems to be the first who gives it fully as "Sir Thomas Brown"; but it seems impossible that there could have been a universal misunderstanding on the point. We are simply left to conclude either that Browne retained some vague belief in witchcraft after having abandoned many other "vulgar errors," or that the habit of mind which led him to publish the *Religio Medici* long after he had ceased to hold to it, may have induced him to profess what was still the orthodox belief before Hale. Browne's intellectual character is still far from being fully understood. In any case, however, Buckle's proposition remains unaffected. There is a remarkable difference of tone between the *Religio* and the *Errors*, and the witch-trial story cannot suffice to overlay it. It is on the strength of the omission to refer to one item in Wilkins' Memoir, which did not affect the main point, that the reviewer makes his imputation.

But by far the most memorable exploit of this critic is his historic deliverance as to the occurrence of earthquakes in Italy. The reader may remember how Buckle, in a note in his second volume<sup>3</sup> exposed the unhappy *Edinburgh* reviewer, who disposed of one of his author's

<sup>1</sup> *Tryall of Witches*, 1716, p. 96. In this edition, which is published with Hale's "Pleas for the Crown," it is stated that the report had "lain a long time in a private Gentleman's Hands in the Country"; but, according to the verbatim reprint of 1838, it had been before printed in 1682.

<sup>2</sup> *Essay on Witchcraft*, 1718, p. 118.

<sup>3</sup> Three-vol. ed. III. 429.

generalisations about the causation of the Spanish character by announcing that "*the only earthquake known to have occurred*" in the Peninsula was "that of Lisbon."<sup>1</sup> It is difficult to-day to conceive that such a gratuitous display of besotted ignorance could be made by a writer in a leading

<sup>1</sup> It will hardly be believed that in reviewing Buckle's second volume in the *Edinburgh*, the same reviewer thus sought to justify his former statement :— "*Our assertion clearly meant, not that no earthquakes had ever occurred there, but that they have been less frequent, and (with one exception) of less historic moment than in other countries.*" The ingenuous exegete then goes on to seek to show that Buckle was very far wrong in stating that "in Spain there have been more earthquakes than in all other parts of Europe put together, Italy excepted." To prove this he cites from Mallet's *Earthquake Catalogue* the total given for the Spanish peninsula *since the 11th century*, while the lists for Italy, France, Belgium, Holland, and Turkey run from the *4th century*. Concerning the Spanish earthquakes, he finally asserts that "very few of them have been of a destructive character," and that of those recorded for the Peninsula, "the great majority occurred not in Spain but in Portugal" (*Edin. Rev.*, July 1861, p. 189). Now a glance at Mallet's table (*Brit. Ass. Report for 1858*, p. 9) of Peninsular earthquakes, which follows Perrey, shows that in the earlier centuries dealt with the number of earthquakes is small simply because the readily available records are so scanty. The simple fact that the numbers for the 11th, 12th, 13th, 14th, and 15th centuries are 3, 4, 3, 8, and 4, while there are 93 noted for last century, and 85 for the first half of this, shows that the small total of Perrey's table is due to the lack of collected information down till recent times. It is not to be supposed that earthquakes are multiplying sixty-fold in Spain in this century as compared with the 11th, 12th, and 13th centuries. Buckle quotes abundant testimony to show that during the last two hundred years alone there have been scores of destructive earthquakes, hardly a generation passing without castles, villages, and towns being destroyed; while of the slighter shocks, which alarm without destroying, "not scores, nor hundreds, but thousands have occurred." The same reviewer, with his habitual fatuity, asserts of Buckle (p. 195) "that in discussing the causes of the peculiar condition of Spain, *he has passed over in total silence the discovery and conquest of America.*" The italics here are the reviewer's. As usual, he had committed himself without reading his author. Buckle actually gives a paragraph (ii., 364) to the specification of the Spanish conquests in America and elsewhere, and points to these conquests as having led up to the Spanish policy of militarism, with its ultimate collapse. After this further exposure of the literary character of the *Edinburgh* reviewer, who asserts that there is scarcely a statement in Buckle's work "which is not capable of being modified or explained in a different manner by other facts which he has omitted or suppressed," the reader will perhaps accept my assurance that Buckle's explanation of Spanish history is in no way affected by the critic's attack. It is only worth preserving, as Buckle thought the first deliverance on Spanish earthquakes worth preserving, as a sample of the lengths of indecent folly to which a rabid religious reviewer can go.

review ; but it is further the fact that the *Quarterly* reviewer, in discussing Buckle's statement as to the earthquakes of Italy, made an exhibition on all fours with that. The two quarterly reviewers seem to have laid their heads together, and, combining their ignorance, divided the labour of disseminating it. Buckle singled out the *Edinburgh* writer, but it seems invidious to neglect him of the *Quarterly*. In contravention of Buckle's statement that "earthquakes and volcanic eruptions are more frequent and more destructive in Italy, and in the Spanish and Portuguese Peninsula, than in any other of the great countries,"<sup>1</sup> he informed the public (p. 52) that there had been only one recorded earthquake in Italy between the years 1200 and 1600—that of Naples in 1496. I will not attempt, after the manner of Buckle, to give twenty authorities for the facts. It seems sufficient to cite one or two authoritative testimonies. First, that of Perrey's Earthquake Catalogue, as reproduced by Mallet,<sup>2</sup> which, on a first survey of the records, shows the chronicled earthquakes in the Italian peninsula, Sicily, Sardinia, and Malta, from the 12th to the 17th century, to be as follows :—12th cent., 18 ; 13th cent., 15 ; 14th cent., 20 ; 15th cent., 18 ; 16th cent., 32 ; 17th cent., 121.<sup>3</sup> It is here at once apparent that the general use of printing preserved mention of many earthquakes that formerly would have passed without permanent record. But even for the earlier centuries dealt with, Perrey, after resort to Muratori and other sources, added a supplementary list of earthquakes as follows :—12th cent., 22 ; 13th cent., 26 ; 14th cent., 51 ; 15th cent., 47. If further evidence be needed, we may cite a modern historian :—

"The most interesting feature in the physical history of the Calabrias is the frequency of their earthquakes. Ever since the Greeks settled in Italy, those provinces have been desolated by such visitations ; and for the last century and a half they have scarcely ever been free from them for more than ten years."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I. 123.

<sup>2</sup> *British Association's Report* for 1858.

<sup>3</sup> The total given in this first list, from the 4th to the 19th century, is 1085.

<sup>4</sup> *Italy and the Italian Islands*, by Professor W. Spalding, third ed., iii.

This information lay easily accessible to the critic ; and even the first edition of Gregorovius' *Geschichte der Stadt Rom im Mittelalter* (1859), then being written, gives references to the earthquakes of 1231 (which destroyed part of the Colosseum), of 1255, and of 1348, which were especially severe.

It will be admitted that a writer who "gives himself away" in this fashion has small claim to be listened-to when he disparages in a general way the authority of such a student as Buckle. He had doubtless consulted some of the many histories of Italy which undertake to set forth the social and intellectual development of the people with barely a glance at such a profoundly important fact as the chronic recurrence of earthquakes ; and when Buckle came with a more scientific method of historiography, the clerical sociologist met him with the weapons which clerical sociology supplies. When further, however, the same critic is found pretending to confute Buckle's statement as to the rarity of war in recent times and at the "present moment" by a zealously-compiled list of wars *down to 1815 only*, we are free to decide as to the value of his moral philosophy. It will not be found surprising that he thought the decline of persecution had been checked by the dissemination of the "Golden Rule," of whose abstract influence on clerical conduct he has given us the above illustrations.

§ 3. MR H. H. BANCROFT'S. *Concerning the early American Civilisations.*

Another set of charges of blundering on matters climatic has been incidentally brought against Buckle by Mr H. H. Bancroft in his voluminous work on the Native Races of the Pacific Coast, a compilation which, though conforming to the inferior literary standards of American scholarship, commands the gratitude of students by its accumulation of multitudes of scattered facts. Unfor-

304. In the earthquake of 1783, it may be remembered, 40,000 persons were destroyed, and 20,000 more died from starvation and disease.

tunately the comments on Buckle have neither this nor any other merit. Before coming to deal in detail with Buckle's views as to Mexico, Mr Bancroft makes the usual misrepresentation of his main principles :—

“Thus Buckle attempts to prove that man's development is wholly dependent upon his physical surroundings.”<sup>1</sup>

The truth is that not only did Buckle expressly devote the bulk of his book to the tracing of non-physical influences, but Mr Bancroft himself, after countering Buckle's account of Central and Southern American civilisation, goes on to lay down doctrines which are substantially Bucklean on these matters, adding only an incoherent specification of an “Almighty fiat.” That expression may save us any general criticism. It will suffice us to examine Mr Bancroft's concrete criticism of Buckle's propositions.

“Mr Buckle, in his attempt to establish a universal theory that heat and moisture inevitably engender civilisation, and that without those combined agencies no civilisation can arise, somewhat overreaches himself. ‘In America, as in Asia and Africa,’ he says, ‘all the original civilisations were seated in hot countries, the whole of Peru proper being within the southern tropic, the whole of Central America and Mexico within the northern tropic.’ The fact is that Cuzco, the capital city of the Incas, is in the Cordilleras, 300 miles from and 11,000 feet above the level of the sea. For the latitude the climate is both cold and dry. The valley of Mexico is warmer and moister, but cannot be called hot and humid. Palenque and Copan approach nearer Mr Buckle's ideal than Cuzco or Mexico, being above the *terra caliente* proper, and yet in a truly hot and humid climate. . . . Again, Mr Buckle declares that, ‘owing to the presence of physical phenomena, the civilisation of America was of necessity confined to those parts where alone it was found by the discoverers of the New World.’ An apparently safe postulate ; but, upon any conceivable hypothesis, there are very many places as well adapted to development as those in which it was found. Once more : ‘The two great conditions of fertility have not been united in any part of the continent north of Mexico.’ When we consider what it is—namely, heat and humidity—on which Mr Buckle makes intellectual evolution dependent, and that not only the Mexican plateau lacked both these essentials, in the full meaning of the term, but that both are found in many places northward, as for instance in some parts of Texas and in Louisiana, a dis-

<sup>1</sup> Work cited, ii. 25.



crepancy in his theory becomes apparent. 'The peculiar configuration of the land,' he continues, 'secured a very large amount of coast, and thus gave to the southern part of North America the character of an island.' An island, yes ; but, as M. Guyot terms it, 'an aerial island,' bordered on either side by sea-coast, but by such sea-coast as formed an almost impassable barrier between the table-land and the ocean.

"'While, therefore,' adds Mr Buckle, 'the position of Mexico near the equator gave it heat, the shape of the land gave it humidity ; and this being the only part of North America in which these two conditions were united, it was likewise the only part which was at all civilised. There can be no doubt that if the sandy plains of California and Southern Columbia, instead of being scorched into sterility, had been irrigated by the rivers of the east, or if the rivers of the east had been accompanied by the heat of the west, the result of either combination would have been that exuberance of soil by which, as the history of the world decisively proves, every early civilisation was preceded. But inasmuch as, of the two elements of fertility, one was deficient in every part of America north of the twentieth parallel, it followed that, until that line was passed, civilisation could gain no resting-place, and there never has been found, and we may confidently assert never will be found, any evidence that even a single ancient nation, in the whole of that enormous continent, was able to make much progress in the arts of life, or organise itself into a fixed and permanent society.'

"This is a broad statement embodying precipitate deductions from false premises, and one which betrays singular ignorance of the country and its climate. These same 'sandy plains of California,' so far from being 'scorched into sterility,' are to-day sending their cereals in every direction—to the east and to the west—and are capable of feeding all Europe.

"I have often wondered why California was not the seat of a primitive civilisation ; why upon every converging line the race deteriorates as this centre is approached ; why, with a cool, salubrious seaboard, a hot and healthful interior, with alternate rainy and dry seasons, alternate seasons of labour and leisure, which encourage producing and hoarding, and which are the primary incentives to accumulation and wealth, in this hot and cool, moist and dry, and invigorating atmosphere, with a fertile soil, a climate which in no season of the year can be called cold or inhospitable, should be found one of the lowest phases of humanity on the North American continent. The cause must be sought in periods more remote, in the convulsions of nature now stilled, in the tumults of nations whose history lies forgotten, forever buried in the past. Theories never will solve the mystery. Indeed, there is no reason why the foundations of the Aztec and Maya-Quiché civilisations may not have been laid north of the

thirty-fifth parallel, although no architectural remains have been discovered there, nor other proof of such an origin ; but upon the banks of the Gila, the Colorado, and the Rio Grande, in Chihuahua, and on the hot dry plains of Arizona and New Mexico, far beyond the limits of Mr Buckle's territory, where 'there never has been found, and we may confidently assert never will be found,' any evidence of progress, are to-day walled towns inhabited by an industrial and agricultural people, whose existence we can trace back for more than three centuries, besides ruins of massive buildings of whose history nothing is known."<sup>1</sup>

This is a fair sample of the style in which Buckle is usually misunderstood, misrepresented, and censured. The last sentence, to begin with, perverts all that was meant to be conveyed by Buckle, when it puts "any evidence of progress" for Buckle's own words, above cited. Buckle never dreamt of denying that progress could be made in the regions specified after the application of European knowledge and resources. He had expressly specified "the seventeenth century," when "the knowledge of Europe was brought to bear upon America," as the time before which there lacks evidence of a people north of the twentieth parallel "reaching even that imperfect civilisation to which the inhabitants of India and of Egypt easily attained." The reference to the people who have lived there for over three centuries is thus a gross irrelevance, which can only serve to mislead the unwary. And even as regards the more lately discovered remains of the "Mound-Builders," Buckle's words will stand. It is generally agreed that the civilisations represented by the remains in the States of Ohio, Mississippi, Virginia, Michigan, Wisconsin, Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, and Missouri, were offshoots from southern civilisations<sup>2</sup>—a possibility which Buckle did not for a moment dispute. He was dealing with the possibility of autochthonous civilisations, not with that of transferred civilisations. And even as regards the ancient transferred civilisation, the great

<sup>1</sup> H. H. Bancroft, *Native Races of the Pacific States*, ii. 51-53.

<sup>2</sup> Baldwin's *Ancient America*, 1872, pp. 52, 70, 71, &c. Compare the remarks of Dunbar, cited above, p. 52.

fact remains that it did not endure, it was not "a fixed and permanent society." Mr Bancroft's triumph is a fiasco. He may well wonder why a primitive civilisation did not arise in California. A thinker who kicks aside the explanatory facts and wantonly misunderstands one who seizes them aright, may well go on idly wondering to the end of the chapter. Buckle gave the reason why the primitive civilisation did not arise where Mr Bancroft thinks it ought to have done: Mr Bancroft's suggestions as to where "the cause must be sought" are barren verbiage. Like so many of Buckle's critics, he does not realise what he says, telling us to "seek" for causes where in the terms of his own case knowledge is a blank, and dismissing "theories" in the very act of framing a theory.

Even as regards the modern development of California, the explanation is found to be in perfect accordance with Buckle's theory. The agriculture of California<sup>1</sup> is largely carried on by means of artificial irrigation, without which it could ill subsist. Even that irrigation was begun on the factitious basis of the great immigration in search of gold, which made beginnings of culture profitable that otherwise could not have been attempted.

In Peru, it is true, under the rule of the Incas, irrigation was extensively practised; but this was in communication with the more spontaneously fertile parts of a highly organised and far-extended empire. The civilisation could not have begun and been carried far in the laboriously irrigated districts. Neither could it, nor did it, arise in Cuzco, the capital city of the Incas, which is ascertained to have been built on the site of a more ancient city, belonging to an older civilisation.<sup>2</sup> Even the Peruvian legends of the founding of Cuzco reveal that it was not the seat of a primitive civilisation.<sup>3</sup> It is in fact the fortress city of a fertile valley, with a sunny and genial climate.<sup>4</sup> Buckle did not say that Peruvian civilisation

<sup>1</sup> That is, Upper California. *Lower California remains sterile, as of old.*

<sup>2</sup> Baldwin, as cited, p. 226.

<sup>3</sup> Prescott's *Conquest*, Kirk's ed. pp. 3-5.

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.*, p. 7 and *passim*.

arose in the mountain city of Cuzco. Neither did he represent the valley of Mexico as superlatively hot and humid, but only as humid relatively to the more northerly regions of the west, while hot enough for great fertility. At the same time, so far from asserting that heat and moisture "inevitably ingender civilisation," he was at pains to show how, when combined in a very high degree, as in Brazil, they may prevent and baffle civilisation. Palenque and Copan he expressly mentioned as places where architectural remains showed civilisation to have been.

Mr Bancroft might be called particularly disingenuous when he specifies heat and humidity as the conditions on which Buckle "makes *intellectual* evolution dependent," were it not that so many writers have been equally unscrupulous. None who has followed the present survey thus far needs to be told that Buckle expressly taught the improbability of a high intellectual development under the merely physical conditions which foster primary civilisations.

The matter of Mr Bancroft's criticism has thus already crumbled down to his proposition that Mexico was "an *aërial* island"; that there was almost no communication between the table-land and the ocean; that *parts* of Texas and Louisiana combined heat and moisture in a higher degree; and that the Mexican plateau "lacked" them "in the full meaning of the term." Now, the argument as to communication between table-land and coast is wholly beside the case, for Buckle's use of the term "island" had reference solely to the greater amount of moisture arising. Mr Bancroft does not see the point. His conception of a "full meaning of the terms" heat and moisture (by which he evidently understands great heat and much moisture) is again beside the case, seeing that Buckle had expressly shown how excessive heat and moisture were deterrent to civilisation. If they existed in the "parts" of Texas and Louisiana which Mr Bancroft has in view, there is the explanation ready made. If

heat and moisture existed there in moderation, it might be that the forest lay too thick round the parts in question for aborigines to get at them. In any case it is clear that on Buckle's method real explanations are attainable, and that on Mr Bancroft's they are not. What is worse, he illustrates, as so many of Buckle's critics have done, the foregone determination to see no truth in the innovator's theory, the prejudiced purpose of overthrowing it at any cost of perversion, evasion, and misrepresentation, which marks a man as unfit for the chair of judgment. The fatal effect of these displays is always to throw a certain suspicion on the whole of a man's work. For any one who has checked his treatment of Buckle, Mr Bancroft becomes an authority always to be followed with hesitation. It is a pity that such a laborious work as his compilation on the Native Races of the Pacific Coast should be thus discredited by what may after all be a single indulgence of a lawless prejudice. But no discredit which may thus be cast on it can be so unmerited as that which he has sought to throw on a better man.

#### § 4. PROFESSOR INGRAM'S. *A Comtist Caprice.*

In a smaller degree, the same comment applies to the singular charge incidentally and irrelevantly cast at Buckle by Professor J. K. Ingram. An intemperate tendency to detraction is only too obvious in Dr Ingram's treatment of all modern economists and sociologists who do not adhere to Comte; but nowhere perhaps is his criticism more gratuitous than in his attempt to convict Buckle of gross ignorance of philosophic history.

It is after an allusion<sup>1</sup> to "the favourite entity of [metaphysical] thinkers, Nature, antecedent to human institutions and furnishing the model to which they should be made to conform," that he thus delivers himself:—

"This idea, which Buckle apparently supposes to have been an

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<sup>1</sup> *History of Political Economy*, p. 61.

invention of Hutcheson's, had come down through Roman judicial theory from the speculations of Greece."

This fling might very well serve posterity as a sample of the wanton and contemptuous imputations which in these days it is become the fashion to throw at Buckle. The passage on which Dr Ingram founds his reckless charge is the following :—

" Though he [Hutcheson] was a firm believer in revelation, he held that the best rules of conduct could be ascertained without its assistance, and could be arrived at by the unaided wit of man ; and that, when arrived at, they were in the aggregate to be respected as the Law of Nature. This confidence in the power of the human understanding was *altogether new in Scotland*, and its appearance forms an epoch in the national literature."<sup>1</sup>

To the first of these two sentences Buckle appends an extract from Hutcheson's "Moral Philosophy," vol. i. p. 1, which concludes as follows :—" These maxims or rules of conduct are therefore *reputed as laws of nature*, and the system or collection of them *is called the LAW OF NATURE*." And Dr Ingram, with the page under his eye, could deliberately suggest that Buckle did not know of the antiquity of the conception "Law of Nature." Some day, perhaps, such a charge made on such grounds will elicit from the literary world a measure of protest which I do not here seek to anticipate. But I cannot abstain from remarking on the discouraging fact that some schools of thought which make much parade of a concern for a high social morality often show so little regard for an individual right which is surely as valid as any other, the right to be justly and truthfully criticised. It would be wrong to say that any particular cast of opinion is peculiarly associated with this disregard for intellectual justice. We find Socialists and Individualists equally unscrupulous in their words concerning opponents ; and we have seen professed rationalists competing with pietists in misrepresenting Buckle. But it is the fact that the Positivist school, for one, from its founder onwards, has shown in criticism sadly

<sup>1</sup> III. 293.

little of that special fairness which its formulas and theories might be held to inculcate. To select certain historic and literary types for indiscriminating praise, and others for indiscriminating blame, is a critical method which the world has had enough of from the religionists of the past ; and which it might well be spared from those who aspire to frame a religion for the future.

§ 5. THE RABID RELIGIOUS REVIEWER. *Ad Majorem Dei gloriam.*

It must finally be confessed, however, that the religion of the past is still supreme in the matter of false witness. It is only by way of showing how much that accomplishment counts for in the general disparagement of Buckle that it is worth while to lengthen this chapter with an account of the attack on his first volume published in the *North British Review*.<sup>1</sup> The specialty of this attack is that there need be no question of mere error about its untruths. They are visibly, one and all, the expedients of religious malevolence. Let a few samples suffice.

1. The reviewer writes—"About French Protestantism two of his [Buckle's] chief authorities are Smedley's History, a publication got up for a popular library, and the work of Capefigue, an author who has been shown to be thoroughly partisan and superficial." Whoever will read Buckle's chapters on French church history will find that he merely cites Smedley occasionally by way of giving *Protestant admissions*<sup>2</sup> as to Protestant misconduct ; and that in addition to Capefigue, who is certainly a better authority than almost any Protestant compilation then available, he currently uses all along Ranke, Monteil, De Thou, Sismondi, Mably, Benoist, Duvernet, Sully, Quick's *Synodicon*, Gregoire, Bazin, Levassor, and Lavallée, besides a dozen sets of memoirs of the period.

2. "His [Buckle's] great authority on Scotch history," says the reviewer, "is Barry's Orkney Islands !" A more

<sup>1</sup> November 1858, pp. 556-558.

<sup>2</sup> *Cp. the Life*, i. 121.

insensate falsehood is not to be found in the literature of our subject. I have gone through the hundreds of authorities cited in a hundred pages of Buckle's section on Scotland without noticing one reference to Barry. As one who has had occasion to pay some attention to the sources of Scottish history, I am free to say that in no book of the period known to me is there to be seen a wider or more various learning in Scotch affairs than is shown in Buckle's volume. The critic himself seems to have been grossly ignorant of the documentary sources. Deriding Buckle's general reference to the records of "the proceedings of the Scotch Assemblies and Consistories," he writes—"at how many meetings of *kirk-session*, Mr Buckle, are there newspaper reporters? But probably you do not know what *consistory* means." Evidently the writer did not know that selections from the Records of many Kirk-Sessions had been printed, and were abundantly cited in Buckle's foot-notes. The strongest terms applied by Buckle to the obsession of the Scottish clergy would not over-emphasise the incompetence of this their vindicator.

3. The critic represents Buckle as asserting that "Rousseau was a more competent judge of philosophy than Dugald Stewart." What Buckle actually said<sup>1</sup> was that Rousseau was "in every respect a more competent judge" of *Montaigne's style* or *literary merit* than was Dugald Stewart, who could see in Montaigne only a "most amusing author." There is no question of philosophy raised, only one of literary effect in a French writer.

4. Passing over some merely imbecile attempts to convict Buckle of blundering, we may finally note this:—"Theodore Parker (!) is his authority for the assertion that there are no distinguished theologians in modern times in England." The reference is to a footnote<sup>2</sup> in which Theodore Parker is only the *first* authority cited. The other authorities quoted for the statement are Sir William Hamilton, Ward ("Ideal of a Christian Church"), Jeffrey, Dowling, Warburton, Bishop Horne's Memoirs, and finally

<sup>1</sup> II. 18, *note*.

<sup>2</sup> I. 355.



John Henry Newman, whose famous words as to Gibbon are reproduced.

It is needless to characterise further the proceedings of such a critic ; but it is important to keep in mind that the cast of mind and temper he exhibits is typical of much of the religious opposition to Buckle. Of the ill odour into which the historian's name and credit have passed, the main ingredients come from the stink-pots of pious passion.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### SOME SPECIALIST CRITICISMS.

THERE remain to be considered a number of special criticisms of Buckle by writers who rank as more or less of experts in one or more of the departments of knowledge touched on by him, and whose blame, for many readers, carries special weight against him. Of these I have grouped seven, of varying importance.

#### § 1. PROFESSOR FLINT'S. *The Retort of Presbyterianism.*

Professor Flint, who ranks among the specialists on the strength of his unfinished work on the Philosophy of History, has contributed to the *Encyclopædia Britannica* a notice of Buckle, which may be described as the attempt of a professional churchman to write down an anti-clerical historian. From a theological professor, who makes it part of his business to champion orthodoxy and to assail rationalism, no fair criticism of such a book as Buckle's could well come; and it is a significant proof of the continued subordination of science and scholarship to religion in England that the editor of the latest edition of the leading encyclopædia should entrust such a subject to such hands. A compilation which can find room for only half a page of matter on the topic of Mithraism affords pages for what is not a sociological examination of Buckle's sociology—of that there is little forthcoming anywhere—but simply the foregone censure of the critic of Presbyterianism by a Presbyterian professor.

In justice to Professor Flint, it must be mentioned that in the rewritten first volume of his work on the Philosophy

of History he has made a very unusual and a very creditable avowal of change of feeling towards Buckle as a man. Replying to Mr Huth's strictures on his criticism of Buckle (with regard to Buckle's on Bossuet), Dr Flint writes :—

"I am glad to have the opportunity thus afforded me of stating that Mr Huth's excellent biography gave me a much higher opinion of Buckle as a man than I entertained before I became acquainted with it. *I had been led, in a way which it is unnecessary to state, to form an estimate of the character of Mr Buckle which Mr Huth's book at once convinced me must be erroneous.* Hence, although I am not aware of having written any word which is unjust towards Mr Buckle, I can readily suppose that I might well have found more to say in his praise than I have done."<sup>1</sup>

I should be loth to lay more stress on the serious nature of the former critical animus here confessed-to than on the candour with which the confession is made. But it is necessary, in the nature of the case, to point out for one thing that the feeling Dr Flint confessedly had against Buckle was extremely apt to affect his whole criticism; and it is necessary for the rest to deal in detail with that criticism as it stands in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. That compilation stands for the guidance or misguidance of thousands of readers who will never see the "History of the Philosophy of History"; and I must here deal with its objections to Buckle as they stand, the more so as Dr Flint is not conscious of any injustice in them. To me they seem biassed and ill-considered. Like too many of our encyclopædia articles, this substitutes an attack on the doctrine dealt-with for the exposition that a reader has a right to look for; and yet the attack itself is disjointed and unsystematic. Unfortunately, it is also misrepresentative. Disposing, in the encyclopedic manner, of Buckle's treatment of French and Scottish history, Dr Flint writes :—

"No explanation of French history can be satisfactory which does not attach due (*sic*) weight to the series of events by which the unity of France was built up, and which only begins after that unity was completed; no explanation of Scottish history can be satisfactory which slurs over the wars with England. . . . The French Revolution

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<sup>1</sup> *History of the Philosophy of History* (1894), i. 234, note.

was, as Buckle represents it, a reaction against the protective spirit—but *it was a great deal more, and that he did not see*; the Scottish Reformation was due in some measure to the antagonism between the nobility and priesthood, as he has amply shown, but he might easily have still more amply shown that it was very far from wholly due to it."

To a critic who in another passage describes Buckle as setting forth a "paradox" which is partly a "truism inaccurately expressed, and partly its exaggeration," it is necessary first to point out the truism that no explanation can be satisfactory which does not attach "*due weight*" to *every* series of events within its scope. Some truisms are hardly worth uttering. And the same thing may surely be said of the proposition as a whole. Buckle openly began his treatment of French history with an "Outline of the history of the French intellect from the middle of the sixteenth century to the accession to power of Louis XIV.," a sufficiently large undertaking for a simple "Introduction to the History of Civilisation in England." On this the critic decides that "no *explanation of French history*" can be satisfactory which does not do something more. But Buckle does not pretend to "explain French history"; he professes to explain parts and phases of it, and does that so well that, despite some errors on his part, the extension of the explanation becomes easy to the reader who grasps his method. It would normally be held to argue a certain dearth of hostile pretext if a man who professed to write a history of the French Revolution were reproached with narrowness of view because he did not discuss the Crusades. And yet Buckle *does*, after all, give a most luminous explanation, in his chapter on the Protective Spirit in France and England, of the different developments of royal and class power in England and France in the feudal period; so that there is really little wanting to explain the manner of the Unification of France. Did Professor Flint, one wonders, really read through the chapters in question?

There is distinct reason for the question, because on the

precise points of the origin of the French Revolution and the explanation of the development of Scotland, the facts are simply not as Dr Flint says. The very passage to which he refers on the former head runs thus :—

“It is no doubt certain that the French Revolution was *essentially* a reaction against the protective and interfering spirit which reached its zenith under Louis XIV., but which, centuries before his reign, had exercised a most injurious influence over the national prosperity. While, however, this must be fully conceded, it is equally certain that the impetus to which the reaction owed its strength, proceeded from England; and that it was English literature which taught the lessons of political liberty, first to France, and through France to the rest of Europe.”<sup>1</sup>

Later, however, Buckle devotes a long and pregnant chapter to the “Proximate Causes of the French Revolution after the middle of the Eighteenth Century,” supplying a quantity of information on the subject which it would be hard to supersede, and which has certainly not been superseded in any English work.

Professor Flint has elsewhere complained that Carlyle gives no adequate explanation of the Revolution in his History; and there the charge is grounded; but Buckle actually did incidentally what Carlyle did not do in his professed account of the Revolution; and yet no one could gather from Dr Flint’s critique that the “Introduction” contained such a chapter. Dr Flint’s sentences commit *suppressio veri* and *suggestio falsi*. Buckle says in so many words that

“In every great epoch there is some one idea at work, which is more powerful than in any other, and which shapes the events of the time and determines their ultimate issue. *In France, during the latter half of the 18th century, this idea was, the inferiority of the internal to the external.*”<sup>2</sup>

If we are not to condemn as disingenuous the Professor’s omission to mention that passage and the chapter which contains it, we must needs decide that he had overlooked the whole. It appears to be the destiny of most of Buckle’s

<sup>1</sup> II. 226.

<sup>2</sup> II. 361.

assailants to indirectly strengthen his credit by showing that they have not read his book.

What are the facts, again, as to Buckle's treatment of Scottish history? So far from "slurring over the wars with England," he puts them in the forefront of his exposition. He records first the duration of warfare between the invading Irish Scots and the previous inhabitants for a period of four centuries, from the departure of the Romans to the reign of Kenneth Mac Alpin; then the struggle with the Norsemen; then, in due detail, the last long and exhausting struggle with England; and this continuity of conflict, but in especial the long grapple with England, is expressly and repeatedly founded on as mainly determining the direction taken by the domestic history of the nation.<sup>1</sup> Whether or not Dr Flint's criticism was shaped by animus, he took little pains to be right in his facts. As for his remarks on the causes of the Scottish Reformation, they merely indicate once more the inability of the Scotch clergy to refute Buckle's main exposition. He did not deny that there were other causes than the main one: he mentioned the influence of Knox as one, though one much exaggerated; he said and showed that the relation of nobles to clergy was the main matter; and in this, so far from having been confuted, he is actually borne out by previous Presbyterian writers.<sup>2</sup>

It may be either slovenly reading or slovenly writing, again, that accounts for the following passage:—

"What Buckle himself says of the achievements of Richelieu, Adam Smith, Voltaire, and others, and of the effects of the protective spirit in France and England, and of religious intolerance in Spain and England, is *irreconcilable with his doctrines that great men, government, and religion have had almost no influence on civilisation.*"

We have seen that Buckle himself, having put his thesis a little unguardedly at the start, was somewhat confused by a criticism of Pattison's of a somewhat similar drift, but

<sup>1</sup> See II. 7-20 for the account of the wars (*cf.* pp. 38-40), and pp. 21-44 for exposition of the results in the development of classes.

<sup>2</sup> See, for instance, the younger M'Crie's *Sketches of Scottish Church History*, 2nd ed., p. 48.

much better laid. But he could not have been so confused by the criticism of Dr Flint, which is a mere misrepresentation. He had asserted again and again that government and religion *did* influence civilisation *for evil*, though unable to influence it for good; and he praised Richelieu and other statesmen for undoing the bad work of previous statesmen—a praise to which Voltaire is no less entitled in respect of his undoing of the work of theologians. His thesis as to individual action was not that great men could not add to the sum of knowledge, but that the moral variations of individuals disappeared in the mass. He is, as we have said, open to criticism in respect of the want of exact correlation of his dicta, the want of exactness in his formulæ; but where he is merely inexact Professor Flint is either unintelligent or unjust. He has completely perverted Buckle's doctrine.<sup>1</sup> And though this is perhaps the high-water mark of false criticism in his article, it falls into yet another inaccuracy which is calculated to raise unpleasant questions about the value of encyclopædia articles. It is in connection with the theory of Scotch deductiveness, as to which we have already had more than enough discussion. I am willing to pass without further argument Dr Flint's assertion that—"To say that deduction is a prominent characteristic of Hutcheson, Reid, or Dugald Stewart, is glaringly contrary to fact"; merely referring the reader to Buckle's statement on Hutcheson;<sup>2</sup> to his emphatic assertion concerning Reid,<sup>3</sup> that "nothing can

<sup>1</sup> See, once more, the following passages:—I, 20, 34, 39, 44, 50-1, 78, 81, 95, 98, 119-121, 125, 152-3, 156-7, 179, 224, 233, 243, 253-4, 272 (in particular), 276, 280, 288; ii. 4, 22, 28 *et seq.* concerning Richelieu; and the whole treatment of the effects of government and religion in France, Spain, and Scotland.

<sup>2</sup> III. 293. Mr Lecky, by the way, is rather headlong (*History of European Morals*, 6th ed., i. 74, *note*), in calling Hutcheson an Irishman. As Buckle notes, he was of Scotch family, and educated in Glasgow University, though born in Ireland. Mr Lecky is also in error in saying Buckle's generalisation applied only to the "Scotch school," to which Hume did not belong. It was expressly applied to *Scotch thinkers* in general, including the men of science.

<sup>3</sup> III. 360, and see the citation from Bain in the notes.

be more absurd than to suppose, as some have done, that he adopted the inductive . . . method," and the context; and to the interesting passage in which Sidney Smith anticipates Buckle's view of Scottish intellectual tendencies.<sup>1</sup> Nor will I examine the proposition that "Hume was not as deductive as Hobbes." But when Professor Flint announces that "Adam Smith, at least as a political economist, was less deductive than Malthus and Ricardo," and that "Black was less so than Dalton and Davy," it is necessary to point out to the trusting reader that what Buckle said of English inductiveness was this:—

"For more than a hundred and fifty years after Bacon, the greatest English thinkers, Newton and Harvey excepted, were eminently inductive; nor was it until the nineteenth century that signs were clearly exhibited of a counter movement."

Now, it is verifiable fact that Dalton's "New System of Chemical Philosophy" was published in or about 1808; that Davy was only born in 1778, and began his London work in 1801; that all the writings of Ricardo, who was of Jewish descent, and educated in Holland, belong to this century; and that, if the first form of Malthus's great Essay appeared in 1798, yet on the one hand it was confessedly an elaboration of a principle already inductively indicated by Hume, Wallace, Smith, Price, Franklin, and Townsend,<sup>2</sup> and on the other hand received its main

<sup>1</sup> "Now what I object to Scotch philosophers in general is, that they reason upon man as they would upon a divinity; they pursue truth, without caring if it be *useful* truth. They are more fond of disputing on mind and matter than on anything which can have a reference to the real world, inhabited by real men, women, and children; a philosopher that descends to the present state of things is debased in their estimation. Look amongst our friends in Edinburgh, and see if there be not some truth in this. I do not speak of great prominent literary personages, *but of the mass of reflecting men in Scotland.*"—Letter to Jeffrey, July 1801, in *Memoir of Sidney Smith*, ed. 1869, p. 286. It is noteworthy that while Smith in this letter praises the practicality of Mackintosh—"I never saw so theoretical a head which contained so much practical understanding"—Cockburn (a non-philosophic Scot) thought Mackintosh wasted time in "speculation and castle-building" (see his *Journal*, 1874, ii. 11, and compare the *Memoirs of Mackintosh*, i. 46, 99, 183).

<sup>2</sup> Malthus himself, while at college, wrote to his father (1787): "I am



development in later editions; while the rest of Malthus's economic writing belongs to the present century. Dr Flint's rejoinder in these regards is thus so absolutely beside the case as to force us to the conclusion that he had not read Buckle's argument, but was doing his *Encyclopædia* critique from hearsay and random dipping. And Professor Flint's deliberate methods, as apart from blunders, are really invidious to the last degree. In his "Philosophy of History in France and Germany,"<sup>1</sup> he quotes Buckle's description of primitive ballads—"they are not only founded on truth, but, making allowance for the colourings of poetry, they are all strictly true"<sup>2</sup>—*without the qualifying clause*, and with no marks of elision; and he proceeds to say that for this "extraordinary assertion" there is "no shadow of evidence," without saying a word about the mass of evidence cited in Buckle's footnote, which gives references to Villemarqué, Talvi, Niebuhr, Laing, Wheaton, Mariner, and Catlin. Buckle may be right or may be wrong in the matter; but what room is there for doubt about the tactic of Dr Flint?

I need not here go at any length into Professor Flint's accusation against Buckle, in his "Philosophy of History in France and Germany,"<sup>3</sup> and in the enlarged edition of that volume, of misrepresenting or unfairly censuring Bossuet. The merits of the matter have been sufficiently gone into by Mr Huth,<sup>4</sup> and it may reasonably be allowed that Buckle's tone is somewhat unscientifically heated. But, on the other hand, relatively to the inveterate perversion of historic proportion by later religious historians as by Bossuet, a distinct protest was certainly needed; and is needed to-day, when we find Professor Flint himself very much more inclined to pardon the bias

rather remarked in college for talking of what actually exists in nature, or may be put to real practical use."—Letter in *Memoir* with 2nd ed. of his *Prin. of Pol. Econ.* (1836), p. xxvii.

<sup>1</sup> *Intro.*, p. 9.

<sup>2</sup> *II.* 295.

<sup>3</sup> Pp. 89-92.

<sup>4</sup> *Life and Writings of Buckle*, ii. 237-9, *note*. Mr Huth in turn charges Dr Flint with repeatedly adopting Buckle's doctrines without acknowledgment.

of Bossuet than that of Condorcet ; and when even leading German works of universal history<sup>1</sup> perpetuate the mediæval conception of Jewish history. For the rest, Buckle did what Professor Flint represents him as not doing — explain Bossuet's narrowness of outlook as a characteristic of his time. But it is necessary to say a word or two more on Professor Flint's statement, made by way of vindicating Bossuet, that the Jews had a "pure and elevating moral and monotheistic creed for many centuries before any other had risen above a degrading and fantastic idolatry, pantheism, or polytheism."<sup>2</sup> I fancy Buckle would in his lifetime have scouted the prediction that such an assertion could be made, close on the last quarter of the century, by a scholar of fair standing ; though if it had been suggested that the scholar would be a Scotch one, he perhaps might, unjustly enough, modify his scepticism. There is of course nothing specially Scotch in the matter : it is but one more illustration of the ecclesiastical perversion of science and scholarship which obtains in these kingdoms, southern and northern alike. Every instructed layman knows Professor Flint's statement to be monstrous ; knows that "the Jews" were long behind the Persians in arriving at monotheism ; that monotheism was the creed of the more enlightened in ancient Egypt ; that the pretence of early monotheism in the Pentateuch is a vast literary fraud ; that at the time of the exile the majority of the people were polytheists ;<sup>3</sup> that the "monotheism" of nine-tenths of the nation, even after the Exile, was never any nearer purity than the so-called dualism of the religion of the Magi ; that the Gospel Jesus indicates a belief in an evil power ; and that Jewish religion was always full of "degrading and fantastic" superstition.

It is characteristic of the orthodox theologian, of course, to speak of pantheism as "degrading." But it still comes on one with a kind of shock to find Professor Flint answering as he does, in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Buckle's protest against the ignorant orthodox practice

<sup>1</sup> See p. 144.

<sup>2</sup> Work cited, p. 90.

<sup>3</sup> See Jer. xi. 13.

of representing Christianity as introducing a body of new moral doctrine into the world. Buckle stated :—

“That the system of morals propounded in the New Testament contained no maxim which had not been previously enunciated, and that some of the most beautiful passages in the Apostolic writings are quotations from pagan authors, is well known to every scholar ; and so far from supplying, as some suppose, an objection against Christianity, it is a strong recommendation of it, as indicating the intimate relation between the doctrines of Christ and the moral sympathies of mankind in different ages. But to assert that Christianity communicated to man moral truths previously unknown, argues, on the part of the assertor, either gross ignorance or wilful fraud. . . .”<sup>1</sup>

A little further on, in connection with the same general argument, there occurs in another footnote this passage: <sup>2</sup>—

“Now, however, the generalisations of moralists have ceased to control the affairs of men, and have made way for the larger doctrine of expediency, which includes all interests and all classes. Systematic writers on morals reached their zenith in the thirteenth century ; fell off rapidly after that period ; were, as Coleridge well says, opposed by ‘the genius of Protestantism’ ; and, by the end of the seventeenth century, became extinct in the most civilised countries ; the *Ductor Dubitantium* of Jeremy Taylor being the last comprehensive attempt of a man of genius to mould society according to the maxims of moralists.”

Of these two passages Professor Flint quotes parts ; taking in the first the portion from “That the system” to “scholar” ; and in the second the portion from “Systematic” to “countries.” Then he adds :—

“ . . . the facts are that the passages in the Apostolic writings known to be quotations from Pagan authors are just three in number,<sup>3</sup> two of which have no claims to beauty ; and that there have been more systematic writers on morals in the nineteenth century than there were writers of all kinds during the thirteenth.”

The issues here may be simplified by at once granting that Buckle's phrase as to “some of the most beautiful passages” being “quotations” was rather loose, though

<sup>1</sup> I. 180, note.

<sup>2</sup> I. 191.

<sup>3</sup> This rejoinder had already been made by a writer in the *Quarterly Review*, July, 1858, p. 54.

not extravagantly so, since probably all three<sup>1</sup> of the passages in question would be conventionally pronounced beautiful. That, however, is a mere side issue: the main question is as to the novelty of New Testament ethics; and on this head, it will be observed, Dr Flint simply seeks to snatch a verdict by laying stress on the point as to the number of absolute "quotations." What I have cited is his whole answer; the phrase "the facts are" being thus a mere misguidance of the reader. And the question rises, Was it wise? One doubts whether orthodoxy gains by a strategy which only has the effect of admitting to all readers of fair perspicacity the truth of Buckle's statement that "*the system of morals propounded in the New Testament contained no maxim which had not been previously enunciated.*"

As regards the statement about the "systematic writers on morals," again, one cannot well accuse Dr Flint of wilful perversion, because his treatment of the point is so damaging to his character for intelligence. He would surely not have so quibbled if he had really seen the obvious fact that Buckle implicitly used the words "morals" and "moralists" in the special technical sense of *a priori* or dogmatic dicta and writers,<sup>2</sup> drawing a distinct line between these and all analysing of moral thinking, whether right or wrong. Surely Dr Flint cannot have seriously believed that Buckle denied the existence of the numerous modern writers on morals to whom he so constantly alludes, and from whom he so often quotes?<sup>3</sup> But

<sup>1</sup> Acts xvii. 29; 1 Cor. xv. 33, from Menander; and Romans vii. 15, which echoes Ovid, though the phrase was doubtless proverbial. But while positive quotations are not numerous, very close parallels are to be counted by scores. See the multitude collected by Dr Ramage in what he oddly entitles "*Bible Echoes in Ancient Classics.*" [Title altered in later issues.] Cp. the Rev. T. S. Millington's no less grotesquely entitled *Testimony of the Heathen to the Truths of Holy Writ*, 1863, 4to.

<sup>2</sup> He clearly had in view the systems of Casuistry. Cp. Maine, *Ancient Law*, p. 352.

<sup>3</sup> I may at this point note that Mr Cliffe Leslie fell into an almost equally bad misrepresentation of Buckle on this point; and it is only his courtesy and obvious wish to be just to Buckle that shield him from such blame as is incurred

if the Professor did not thus absurdly misunderstand Buckle's note, what are we to make of his suppression of the phrase "made way for the larger doctrine of expediency," and the allusion to Jeremy Taylor, which would have made clear to every reader what Buckle meant?

It is difficult to say. What is pretty certain is that the prepossessions and the tactics of our theological writers, in their dealings with innovating thinkers, have cumbered the ground with a mass of quasi-criticism that must in the nature of things ultimately do much more to discredit the theological cause than it can in our own day to discredit those against whom it is directed, though that is probably not a little. It is encouraging to see so much promise of a better course as is implied in Professor Flint's very frank avowal of the state of prejudice in which he formerly dealt with Buckle in particular; but the Professor has need to carry his repentance a good deal further. His rewritten volume leaves him finally open to judgment as

by Dr Flint. He writes: "Mr Buckle displays less than his customary erudition when he states that theology had been *finally* separated from morals in the seventeenth century, from politics before the middle of the eighteenth" (*Essays on Political and Moral Philosophy*, p. 153). Now, the "finally" here is not only an addition to Buckle's substantive words (iii. 424-5), but it perverts their meaning as shown in the context and the footnotes. Both clearly show that he meant the separation in question was *begun* at the times specified. Buckle expressly states that Cumberland "*was the first* [clergyman] who endeavoured to construct a system of morals without the aid of theology," while Warburton "*was the first* [clergyman] who laid down that the State must consider religion in reference not to revelation but to expediency." He does go on to say that the change thus begun has been carried in our own day to the extent of including average opinion, and then it is that he uses the loose expression (p. 427): "*thus it was that, in England, theology was finally severed from the two great departments of ethics and of government.*" But he still notes that the change was very gradual, "and has not yet produced the whole of those results which we have every reason to anticipate." He certainly knew as well as anybody else how far the connection of morals and politics with theology still subsists. Mr Cliffe Leslie is indeed right in so far as his sentence implies that Buckle overlooked the continued connection of "theology" with politics and ethics in the optimistic Deism of Smith and others of his time. In point of fact, Thomas Paine's revolutionary politics are in this sense "theological." Buckle was really using the word "theology" in the restricted sense of orthodoxy. But his lapse was clearly one of loose or conventional use of terms, and was not at all from defect of "erudition."

an inveterately inaccurate critic and a frequently unjust judge, and this in terms not so much of temperament as of theological prepossession. His temperament, indeed, has visibly ripened with years, and in ripening has corrected some of the worst crudities of his professional prejudice; but it seems as if nothing could substantially cure them. In his rewritten and enlarged volume on the Philosophy of History he is much more careful to be fair than formerly, much more ready to acknowledge merit in a rationalistic writer, much more alive to the various distribution of faculty in men, as well as more fully read than formerly. And yet with all the improvement, there are strange failures to take proper pains with adversaries, as where he dismisses Volney on a mere survey of the *Ruines*, without a word of the powerful *Leçons d'Histoire*, which are among Volney's main contributions to the philosophy of history; and no less strange failures to represent rightly the teaching of writings actually discussed. The worst of these latter failures is perhaps the criticism of Charles Comte, a writer most unjustly neglected in comparison with his namesake. Professor Flint passes on him a number of eulogies, and in this connection admits the competence of the judgment of Buckle, who had praised Comte highly. The critic's last word, too, is an added footnote of approbation. Yet between these opening and closing eulogies there is as much and as blameworthy misrepresentation as could well be found in any criticism of equal length by a critic of good standing. If any one doubts the justice of the foregoing strictures on Professor Flint, let him investigate this criticism.

Professor Flint admits that Charles Comte's discussion of the influence of physical nature on human development "was as great an advance on Montesquieu's treatment of the subject as Montesquieu's had been on that of Bodin. It disproved, corrected, or confirmed a host of Montesquieu's observations and conclusions." Yet he goes on:—

"But while Comte thus justly criticised Montesquieu, he himself exaggerated the efficiency of physical agencies. *Indeed, he virtually*

*traced to their operation the whole development of history.* And this he could not consistently avoid doing. Having assumed that human nature was essentially sensation conditioned by organisation, and, consequently, passive, he could not logically avoid holding also that the development of human nature and the evolution of human society have been absolutely determined by the factors which modify the bodily organisation and act on the bodily senses of man. Accordingly he has assumed that physical agencies *ultimately* account for historical change and movement, for public institutions and laws. . . . Charles Comte fully recognises that the same physical medium has a very different influence on different generations ; and that institutions and laws, education and manners, and, in a word, *all the constituents of the social medium have as real an influence on the development of history as those of the social medium.* Yet he assumes the latter to be the first, *although to a large extent only indirect*, causes of the whole amount of change effected. A human nature in itself utterly empty and passive must be built up through the senses from without. It may be the subject of history, but it cannot be also its chief factor. Here lay Charles Comte's radical error. He failed to perceive that the intelligence, the imagination, the passions, the conscience, and the will of man are *more direct and powerful* historical agencies than climate or soil."<sup>1</sup>

It is almost sufficient to read the latter part of this extract to see that the statements in the first part are untrue. The first part, which is separated from the second by a paragraph on a side issue, is wholly inconsistent with it, and gives an utterly different impression. But the untruth can be best realised by comparing with it a passage from Charles Comte himself, one to which he especially pointed in his exposure of the misrepresentation of Dunoyer in the *avant-propos* to his second edition. His words are :—

“ Il n'est aucun être qui puisse exercer une plus grande influence sur sa propre destinée que l'homme ; il n'en est aucun qui ait plus de moyens de paralyser les causes qui tendent à lui nuire, ou de seconder celles qui lui sont favorables ; mais, pour agir dans l'un ou l'autre sens, il a besoin de voir distinctement quelles sont ces causes : s'il ne les connaît pas, il reste inactif ; s'il les juge mal, il agit en sens contraire de ses intérêts.”<sup>2</sup>

There Comte expressly and emphatically affirms the power of man to influence his own destiny, and to employ or

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 577-579.

<sup>2</sup> *Traité de Législation*, 2e. édit., iii. 190-191.

resist natural forces. He even carries his insistence to the point of partly overbalancing the statement ; and his words utterly exclude the idea of "a human nature in itself utterly empty and passive." What is more, the whole of the constructive or prescriptive part of his book proceeds on his analytic conclusion that the great danger to civilisation is the conquest of civilised and agricultural peoples by predatory peoples ; and the facility of such conquest in past ages he explicitly attributes, not to the physical effects of climate, as Montesquieu and others had done, but to the psychological or moral developments set up by the different life conditions. The hunting peoples, he declared, overpowered the agricultural, because their special pursuit or science was "to surprise, to deceive, to destroy."<sup>1</sup> To say that this doctrine ignores the direct and powerful influence of the passions, the intelligence, the imagination, and the will of man on his history, is to turn just judgment out of doors. Professor Flint's own words confound him. He admits in one breath that Comte declared climatic influences to be "to a large extent only indirect," and in the next he says Comte failed to perceive that certain other influences are "more direct." Those other agencies, we have seen, Comte did specify as peculiarly direct. The fact is, Dr Flint, like so many another prejudiced critic, began his censure before he had read his author ; and after penning an utterly unjust and erroneous judgment, and partly seeing it to be so, would only strive to patch it up by bungling qualifications and fresh injustice. The result is a medley of contradiction and error that critical science can only pronounce scandalous.

And even this is not all. To general misrepresentation by way of argument and verdict is added outrageous blundering in professed recapitulation. In the paragraph which I have left out of the above extract from Dr Flint, he thus further misrepresents Charles Comte. It begins :—

"Various authors have represented civilisation as advancing from

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<sup>1</sup> *Traité de Législation*, 2e. édit., iii. 359.



east to west. According to Charles Comte it has spread *from the equator northwards*. 'When we watch the course of civilisation on each of the chief divisions of the earth, we see enlightenment at first acquired *in warm climates*; then expand into temperate climates; and at length stop at, or hardly penetrate into, cold climates.' . . . There is no evidence that civilisation originated *at the equator*. . . . The lands earliest civilised, Comte says, were China, Hindostan, Persia, a part of Arabia, Egypt, and Asia Minor. But none of these lands are *on the equator*; and most of them are a long way from it."<sup>1</sup>

There is no need to go further than the passage itself to expose its astounding carelessness. The very extract given from Comte to show that he made civilisation spread "from the equator" shows that he did *not* do so. His words are "warm climates." Anyone but a professed partisan might have reflected that Comte, a careful writer, could hardly blunder so far as to place the beginnings of civilisation in general at the equator when he had actually placed them in detail in a number of countries which were more or less far from the equator. It is left for Dr Flint to make openly and inexcusably a blunder if possible worse than that he charges on Comte. I know nothing in modern criticism to compare with it.

Such bewrayals as these force us to pass a serious judgment on Professor Flint as a critical writer on matters philosophical. I have said that he has learned much in spirit as well as in matter since he first wrote on "The Philosophy of History in France and Germany;" but there is in his own way of thought something that disqualifies him for the highest tasks of logical analysis. He actually thinks to rebut doctrines concerning the power of Nature over humanity by retailing from one M'Combie<sup>2</sup> such a primeval piece of apriorism as this :—

"It is not Nature which is in India too grand—not Nature which is in excess, but man who is too little man, who is in defect. Man there is not what he ought to be, *not what he was meant to be*, not properly man. . . . Nature is no man's enemy except in so far as he is an enemy to himself."

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<sup>1</sup> Work cited, p. 578.

<sup>2</sup> Citing *Modern Civilisation in Relation to Christianity*, pp. 50, 51.

The writer of this passage is simply incapable of realising the problem he discusses. The very question to be answered is, *Why* is man in India "not properly man," as the reverend gentleman puts it; and his answer amounts to saying that man in India has frustrated the purpose of Omnipotence by wantonly choosing to be bad. This is the sociology of the ancient Semite, of the Dark Ages, and of Joseph de Maistre; an ineptitude of theory now calling not for confutation but for contempt from anyone capable of carrying an argument through three consecutive stages. And yet Dr Flint endorses the sentence quoted, pronouncing it<sup>1</sup> to be the utterance of "a thoughtful writer." To such a judge any extremity of fallacy is possible. He is unfitted by his creed to frame or estimate a philosophy of history worthy of the name.

§ 2. MR GLADSTONE'S. *The Retort of Anglicanism.*

While Professor Flint does battle against Buckle on behalf of the Church of Scotland, Mr Gladstone, with a more open resentment, has sought to deal a more violent stroke on behalf of the Church of England, which, however, Buckle had not arraigned with any such thoroughness and severity as he put into his study of the Church of Scotland. The ostensible ground of Mr Gladstone's indignation—for his retort reaches that pitch—is the footnote in which Buckle emphatically endorses the account given by Macaulay of the average status of the English clergy in the latter part of the seventeenth century. It is worth quoting in full:—

"Everything Mr Macaulay has said on the contempt into which the clergy fell in the reign of Charles II. is perfectly accurate; and from evidence which I have collected I know that this very able writer, of whose immense research few people are competent judges, has rather understated the case than overstated it. On several subjects I should venture to differ from Mr Macaulay; but I cannot refrain from expressing my admiration of his unwearied diligence, of the consummate skill with which he has arranged his materials, and of the noble love

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<sup>1</sup> *Hist. of Philos. of Hist.*, i. 276.

of liberty which animates his entire work. These are qualities which will long survive the aspersions of his puny detractors—men who, in point of knowledge and ability, are unworthy to loosen the shoe-latchet of him they foolishly attack.”<sup>1</sup>

It can hardly have been the latter part of this warm endorsement which moved Mr Gladstone to such a much less seemly warmth as is apparent in the following passage of his essay on Macaulay:—

“Quote if you choose publicans on the liquor laws, or slavedrivers on the capacities of blacks; cite Martial as a witness to purity, or Bacchus to sobriety; put Danton to conduct a bloodless revolution, or swear in the Gracchi as special constables; but do not set up Mr Buckle as an arbiter of judicial measure or precision, nor let the fame of anything that is called a religion or a clergy depend upon his nod.”<sup>2</sup>

No *tu quoque* could more effectively dispose of this raging outbreak than it does of itself. As a display of “judicial measure or precision” it quite dispenses with criticism. But our business here is not to remark how far Mr Gladstone can sink below the temper of reason and the decorum of discussion when he is fighting for his church or his creed: it is to ascertain whether he or Buckle is the more to be trusted on such a question as that in dispute. Buckle, it will be noted, says he has collected evidence on the point over and above that cited by Macaulay, which is fairly ample. That additional evidence is not available; but it is partly compensated for by the citations of Mr Lecky, who adds<sup>3</sup> to Macaulay’s references further testimonies from Perry’s History of the Church, Chamberlayne’s *Notitiæ* (1669), Burnet, Archbishop Tenison, Calamy, Gay, Hall, Burton, and Leslie, and gives his opinion on the issue thus:—

“Macaulay’s well-known description of the clergy in the latter part of the seventeenth century has been severely criticised in a little volume by Churchill Babington. It is clear that Macaulay greatly understated the number of men of good family that entered the Church; and his picture is perhaps, in other respects, a little over-

<sup>1</sup> I. 394.

<sup>2</sup> *Gleanings of Past Years*, ii. 333.

<sup>3</sup> *Hist. of England in the 18th Cent.*, new ed., i. 94-97.

coloured, but the passages I have cited are, I think, quite sufficient to establish its substantial accuracy."

Here is at least a general vindication of Buckle as well as Macaulay; and though Mr Lecky thinks Macaulay over-colours the picture in some places, he himself colours it here and there more strongly than did Macaulay. His remark that the domestic chaplains "*often* closed their career by purchasing some small living at the expense of a marriage with the cast-off mistress of their patron," is very much stronger than Macaulay's language on the same point. He thus gives colour to Buckle's remark that Macaulay had rather understated than overstated the case, since no item in the list could be more important than this. Macaulay's proposition was that the rural clergy, who were the great mass, were in a condemned and sunken position as compared with those in the universities, the great cathedrals, and the capital; and it is this proposition which Buckle maintains. What, then, is the evidence on which Mr Gladstone relies to back up his aspersions on Buckle's credit? We have seen that Mr Lecky holds Macaulay to have "greatly understated the number of men of good family that entered the Church;" and that point may be let pass at once. Though he used the word "everything," it could not be of the number of men of "family" among the clergy that Buckle was thinking, whatever stress Macaulay may have laid on such a matter. The real question is as to whether the majority, or a large proportion, of the rural clergy were (1) so ill paid as to be unable to maintain the dignity of their office; had (2) to send their children to farm service and house service; and (3) were unable to keep up anything like a habit of study, having themselves to labour for their bread; and further, whether (4) the numerous chaplain or "Levite" class occupied as a rule a menial position in the houses of the gentry, and often married women servants and sometimes cast-off mistresses. How does Mr Gladstone confute the statements of Macaulay on this head, and the evidence adduced for them? He resorts to the work of Mr Churchill Babington; he recites the testimonies

collected by Mr Babington which seem to clash with those cited by Macaulay; and he does not even attempt to show that Macaulay's evidences are in themselves invalid, save as regards Eachard, and the historian's express reference to the light literature of the time. In fine, Mr Gladstone's handling of this problem in evidence is the loose forensic handling which is customary in the strife of political parties, and in the polemics of orthodox religion. He has no more confuted Macaulay by his arguments than he has discredited Buckle by his vituperation.

Let us take the main points one by one.

I. Were the rural clergy as a rule ill paid? Mr Gladstone, finding Eachard speaking of the "extreme poverty" of the hundreds of clergy who had but £20 or £30 per annum, makes this comment:

"Now, multiplying by four for the then greater power of money, these extreme cases correspond with £80 and £120 at the present day; and there have been not only hundreds, but thousands, of the clergy in our own time, whose professional incomes have not risen above the higher of the figures."

For this estimate of values, which simply begs the question in dispute, Mr Gladstone offers no proof whatever. He recklessly follows the most reckless step of Mr Babington, who, after remarking that the old incomes "must be multiplied by some figure, *by four perhaps*, to bring their sums up to the present value" of money, proceeds to write of an old income of £100—"i.e., £400 of our money." Calculations of this kind need the most careful substantiation, and Mr Gladstone does not even suggest how Mr Babington's can be substantiated. It is really indefensible.<sup>1</sup> Some things in the seventeenth century were indeed cheaper than they are to-day; and average needs were certainly fewer. But some of the main necessities of life, as cloth-

<sup>1</sup> It is true that Adam Smith (B. iv. ch. i.) puts it that we must "carry about a shilling in our pocket, where a groat would have done before." But this calculation (which barely trebles the old purchasing power of money) expressly applies to the value of money before the "*discovery of the American mines*," and not at all to the mere difference between the values of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

ing, were assuredly not in general cheaper, in money price, than they are to-day; nor was even bread so. In 1661, wheat was at 70s. 6d. a quarter; in 1674, 68s. 8d.; in 1682, it was 43s. 8d.; in 1684, from 42s. to 34s.; in 1685, 46s. 8d., and so on;<sup>1</sup> and artisans, then ill-off as compared with those of some previous periods, would in the country districts earn from £15 to £20 a year.<sup>2</sup> There can be no better test than this when we are dealing with small incomes. £1000 a year might in 1680 be as good as £3000 in 1880, because needs were then so much fewer; but when we come to the prime necessities of life there could be no such disparity in the sufficiency of incomes. It is a question of bread, beef, and clothing. It is thus perfectly clear that an income of £20 in 1670 was not nearly as good as an income of £80 in 1870, when bread and clothes are cheaper than ever. A decisive test may be found in the program of expenditure in Cowley's "Proposition for the Advancement of Experimental Philosophy," which sets forth a scheme of a "philosophical college," and the salaries to be paid to all connected with it. It is expressly planned in an economical way, but it is proposed to pay the head-cook and the gardeners £20 a year each, *in addition to food and lodging*, while the librarian and surgeon are to get £30, and the chaplain and professors £120 each. It is clear that £20 a year was then a small salary, since even the scullion was to have £4.<sup>3</sup> And a dozen literary allusions of last century serve to show that a married clergyman with £20 a year must have been very poor indeed. Burnet—on this point a decisive authority—mentioning that even in Anne's time "we have among us some hundreds of cures that have not, of certain provision, twenty pounds a year, and *some thousands that have not fifty*," goes on to ask: "*Where the encouragement is so small, what can it be expected that clergymen should be?*"<sup>4</sup> Will

<sup>1</sup> In 1841-50 it averaged 67s. 6d.; in 1881-84, 47s. 3d. (Mulhall's *History of Prices*, 1885, p. 118).

<sup>2</sup> Rogers, *Work and Wages*, pp. 60-63.

<sup>3</sup> Cowley's *Essays*, ed. 1868, p. 168.

<sup>4</sup> *History of his Own Time*, ed. 1838, p. 745. Cp. Pref. to Part II. of his

Mr Gladstone pretend that Burnet could possibly have written thus if the thousands of incomes of which he spoke were sufficient to procure the comfort which a family can have to-day in a village on £200 a year? Mr Gladstone cites Eachard as to the hundreds of cures at £20 or £30, but has no reference to Burnet's "thousands that have not fifty." He further cites Walker, "who calls a living of £40 or £45 a year small." Such a living, Mr Gladstone goes on, "corresponds with £160 or £180 at the present time. That is still about the income of a 'small living.'" This just after acknowledging that "thousands" of the clergy to-day have had only £120 *or less*! It does not occur to Mr Gladstone to cite Goldsmith, whose village parson is "passing rich with forty pounds a year." Goldsmith was writing on his recollection of his brother's case in Ireland,<sup>1</sup> where the clergy as a whole were surely worse paid than in England; and the point of his line for English readers was that that must be an extremely primitive and simple life where the sum of £40 a year could make a man "passing rich." What then could £20 or £30 represent, even a generation earlier, in England, where food prices were considerably more, and the whole standards of life higher in proportion? Tested by the measure of income, Macaulay's proposition stands perfectly firm, and Mr Gladstone's attack collapses.

By way of making good his assumption as to money values, Mr Gladstone sums up that "Of the aggregate national income there can, we think, be no doubt that the clerical order had not a smaller, but a larger, share" than now. The "there can be no doubt" has to do duty as evidence; there is none else. Now Macaulay expressly pointed out that

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*History of the Reformation* (Nare's ed. ii. p. xvi.) where he says: "some hundreds of parishes in England pay *not* £10 a year to their pastors," and speaks of it as a common case, ever since the Reformation, that "the minister is of so mean a condition, and hath so incompetent a maintenance, that he can scarce secure himself from extreme want and great contempt."

<sup>1</sup> *Cp.* Masson's *Memoir of Goldsmith* in *Globe ed. of Works*, p. lix.

"The main support of the Church was derived from the tithe; and the tithe bore to the rent a much smaller ratio than at present. King estimated the whole income of the parochial and collegiate clergy at only £480,000 a year, Davenant at only £544,000 a year. It is certainly now more than seven times as great as the larger of these two sums. The average rent of the land has not, according to any estimate, increased proportionally. It follows that the rectors and vicars must have been, as compared with the neighbouring knights and squires, much poorer in the seventeenth than in the nineteenth century."

To these citations and this argument Mr Gladstone does not even allude. He settles the matter with a "there can be no doubt," though his sole guide, Mr Babington, had left the matter in great doubt. And this is the authority who goes about to settle, by vituperation, the title of Buckle to determine any dispute by his "nod."

II. Did the rural clergy often have to send their children to farm or house service? Mr Gladstone is reckless enough to aver that Macaulay's statement "is no more and no less than a pure fable." It is difficult to speak with amenity of such wantonness of asseveration. Mr Gladstone has referred to Eachard. Eachard expressly asserts that sons of clergymen had been known to have to earn a living by holding horses and waiting on tapsters. Macaulay expressly cites the evidence of Fielding, who, a generation later, making Mrs Seagrim and Mrs Honour descendants of clergymen, remarks that such instances were then not infrequent. With these evidences Mr Gladstone does nothing. He prefers to cite from Mr Babington what he thinks are two contrary evidences. One is Fuller's general remark that "the children of clergymen have been as successful as the sons of men of other professions"<sup>1</sup>—a phrase proving nothing whatever. The other is the statement of White Kennet, that "many of the poorer clergy" do their best to give their sons school learning, but are afterwards "driven to divert them to mean and unsuitable employs."

<sup>1</sup> Mr Babington, advancing this testimony, remarked that "Fuller wrote his *Worthies* soon after the Restoration," though he knew that Fuller died in 1661.



Here is a direct corroboration of the very statement which Mr Gladstone professes to be overthrowing. Clutching at anything Mr Babington could give him, he seems to think he turns the hostile fact into a support by saying that Kennet's testimony applies to the "fringe," whereas Macaulay speaks of "the order." But we have Burnet's testimony that in Anne's day there were still "thousands" of clergy with less than fifty pounds a year; and it is plain that Burnet held these thousands to be very poor. If then we have thousands of country priests utterly unable to give their sons a university training, the assertion that many of them had to put their boys to farm service and their girls to domestic service, though somewhat too broadly phrased, becomes about as reasonable *a priori* as it has been shown to be *a posteriori*. Mr Gladstone's aspersion recoils in his face. He mentions some other authorities, whom he does not quote, as saying things which confute Macaulay's statement. But it stands to reason that he quoted Mr Babington's strongest witnesses, and they do less than nothing to prove his point. Even if other writers could be cited as indicating that some country priests were able to bring up their children in a refined way, it would avail nothing as against the evidence that many were utterly unable to do so. Mr Gladstone's great intellectual defect is his inability to distinguish between good and bad arguments on their logical merits; and where Mr Babington writes with a considerable measure of judgment, being only at times disingenuous or extravagant, his disciple is always exorbitant and unjudicial.

III. Were the rural clergy able to buy books and keep up their studies? On this head Mr Gladstone merely (a) quotes an ironical passage from Eachard, whose irony he disguises, and which proves nothing; (b) tells us what Bishop Bull thought a clergyman *should* do in the way of studying the Fathers; and (c) points out that Burnet asked about as much of his clergy as any bishop would do now. What does all this avail as against the solid facts which prove that the mass of the rural clergy *did* not and *could*

not rise to the level of the requirements of Bull and Burnet? Bull insisted on a knowledge of all the Fathers of the first three centuries. Can even Mr Gladstone bring himself to believe that such knowledge was even moderately common among the rural clergy of that time? He is forced to admit that books were then difficult to procure. I have before me the catalogue of the library of Anthony Collins, sold in London, by auction, in 1731, with all the sale prices marked in the margin. In that list, the 1662 (Paris) edition of Epiphanius goes for £1, 8s.; Grabe's *Spicilegium* (1698) for 6s. 6d.; Arnobius' *Adversus Gentes* (ed. 1651) for 8s.; Irenæus (ed. 1710) for £1, 16s.; the *Præparatio* and *Demonstratio* of Eusebius (ed. 1628) for £1, 19s.; Cave's "Lives of the Fathers" for 17s.; Hudson's Josephus for £1, 9s.; and Huet's Origen for £1, 5s. 6d. Will it be disputed that these prices, taken at random, show that rural priests in general could not possibly possess<sup>1</sup> the books which Bishop Bull prescribed for a well-qualified clergyman? Is there, further, much improbability about Macaulay's remark that to have a dozen volumes was rather exceptional among the rural clergy? On an income of from £15 to £45, would many shillings be available for books? Macaulay points for general proof to the Life of Thomas Bray, the founder of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. Mr Gladstone does not even allude to this source of evidence. He thinks rather to make an effect by pointing out that, whereas Macaulay said Bull's were almost the only important theological works which came from a rural parsonage, the works of *Sherlock*, Norris, Fulwood, *Fuller* (*who died in 1661*), Kettlewell, and *Beveridge*—"many of them recently republished"—all came from country parsonages. As a matter of fact, Macaulay had mentioned one of the three Sherlocks (William) as a city clergyman; and of the two others, Mr Gladstone must mean Richard, whose "Practical Christian," though edited by Bishop

<sup>1</sup> Professor Gardiner, in a paragraph on the country gentry and clergy (*Student's Hist.*, p. 633), puts it generally that "Books were few," and that the country clergyman "had few means of cultivating his mind."

Wilson in 1713, and reprinted in 1841-4, is not an "important theological work" in Macaulay's sense, but a devotional treatise. Norris (John) was only presented to his first living in 1689, and so is out of the field. Nor have his works been reprinted for two hundred years. Fullwood's "Roma Ruit" may pass for an "important theological work," but it has *not* been recently republished. Fuller, as Mr Gladstone parenthetically admits, died in 1661, and is thus also out of the question. Kettlewell was a Fellow of Lincoln, and was presented to his living in 1682. His works are not theologically important, being either devotional treatises or arguments on the doctrine of Passive Obedience, and only a few have been reprinted as tracts in this century. Beveridge, again, is one of the writers actually mentioned by Macaulay as city clergymen. He left his living of Ealing in 1672 to go to London; and though some of his main works were then published, he was even before 1672 anything but a typical country priest, living as he did within a short distance of the metropolis. Macaulay made the small oversight of not recognising that he published important works before getting a city living. There remain the names of Tower-son and Puller, of whom the first, while a country rector, wrote a folio on the Catechism, and other works, *not* reprinted in this century; and the second wrote in his country parsonage his "Moderation of the Church of England" (1679), a learned but surely not a theologically important work, though reprinted for ecclesiastical purposes in our own day.<sup>1</sup> In any case, it was issued in the very year in which Puller became a London rector, and it would be a small matter if he were accordingly classed as a city clergyman. What now becomes of Mr Gladstone's "list of men who sent forth from country parsonages works of divinity that were then, and in most cases that are now, after two hundred years, esteemed"? His list of relevant cases falls to two or three. He has, without any personal investigation, claimed Beveridge as a country priest, not

<sup>1</sup> Adapted in 1818; "revised edition," 1870.

noting that for the greater part of his clerical life Beveridge was in London. His correction of Macaulay's error here is itself partly an error, put as it is. He has cited Richard Sherlock, Fuller, and Norris irrelevantly. He has written as if Fullwood, Kettlewell, and Towerson were durably important theologians. Where Macaulay wrote with over-emphasis, as he was so given to doing, Mr Gladstone has made him seem comparatively rigorous by his own excessive laxity and inflation. It would have been a simple matter to show, as against Macaulay, that there must have been some scores or more of fair scholars with fair libraries in the better endowed livings, but Mr Gladstone misses proving that much in his attempt to prove a great deal more.

IV. Did the chaplain or "Levite" class, as a rule, occupy a menial position, often marrying domestic servants, and sometimes discarded mistresses? Mr Gladstone passes over this, one of the two main items in Macaulay's statement, with a mere blustering and baseless denial, after so paraphrasing it as to falsify its purport. He represents Macaulay as speaking generally "concerning the marriages of the clergy," where he describes the chaplain as ordinarily marrying a servant of his patron, and sometimes one suspected of standing too high in his favour. It was not at all a general statement "concerning the marriages of the clergy." It expressly applied to the chaplains who "*perhaps*, after some years of service" in a partly menial capacity, were presented to a living. It did not at all apply to the numerous priests who were presented to livings without having been chaplains. After thus distorting the statement, Mr Gladstone writes:—"For the extraordinary libel on the purity of the contemporary brides of clergymen there does not appear to be either the foundation or even the pretext of authority." "Or even the pretext"! When Macaulay cited in his text the remark of Swift, in the next generation, that in a great household the chaplain was the resource of a lady's maid whose character had been blown upon, and who was

therefore forced to give up hopes of catching the steward,<sup>1</sup> adding in a footnote a further reference to Swift's *Essay on the Fates of Clergymen*, where he makes one of his two personages marry a farmer's widow and the other a cast-off mistress! Than Swift there was no more zealous churchman in that age, and he was quick to champion the clergy when sceptics derided them. If he, writing when the Church was partly recovering its ground, could thus repeatedly represent clergymen as making such marriages as those under discussion, what are we to believe? The fact that Mr Gladstone, with these testimonies under his eyes, could say that Macaulay had not even the pretext of authority for his statement, is the decisive proof of his own untrustworthiness in the most serious disputation. Put beside his abuse of Buckle, it serves only too well to measure the sway of his sectarian passion over his moral nature. He has simply played the part of an intemperate special pleader in a question which should be one of dispassionate historical criticism. In his headlong way he has caught at any arguments that lay to his hand, making no independent investigation, forcing on every unverified detail the purport which would best suit him, absolutely ignoring those testimonials which he cannot overthrow, and falling back on blatant invective by way of dismissing the judgment of Buckle. In addition to the passages above noticed, Macaulay cites various testimonies to show that domestic chaplains of the period were treated as humble underlings, and were looked down upon by the country attorney and apothecary. Mr Lecky quotes another testimony to the same effect, and a further passage from Swift<sup>2</sup> in which he describes the average country clergyman as living like a plain farmer, and as "sometimes graciously invited by the squire, where he sitteth at humble distance." All evidence of this kind Mr Gladstone withholds from his readers, as a political partisan withholds all the facts which tell against his side, or as a theologian sup-

<sup>1</sup> See the *Directions to the Waiting-Maid* in the *Directions to Servants*.

<sup>2</sup> *Considerations on two Bills relating to the Clergy of Ireland*.

presses all the facts which clash with his creed. I am no indiscriminate defender of Macaulay, who even in this matter sometimes vitiates his record by snobbish as well as by strong language. He was capable of obstinately sticking to an error: he did this in the case of Penn, in a way that makes it hard to think of him as highly conscientious. Mr Gladstone, in a temperate mood, says of him justly enough that the very excellence of his memory was apt to be a snare to him. The truth is that he was viciously averse to admitting that he had ever been wrong, no matter how strong the evidence against him. As little as Mr Gladstone had he the scientific temper and the scientific need for exactness and analysis. Hence, perhaps, the predominance of sympathy and esteem in Mr Gladstone's view of the reviewer who once so completely overthrew him. Macaulay had certainly less capacity for such magnanimity, as he had less of Mr Gladstone's gift of political reconsideration. But though Mr Gladstone has on the other hand confessed to political sins, he has never shown much sadness of repentance, or checked very strongly his self-righteous impulse to impute sin to others for mere difference of belief; and in few matters of common opinion has he ever taken half the pains that Macaulay generally did to know the facts of a case before delivering judgment on it. Thus it comes about that even where Macaulay is over-emphatic and over-coloured, Mr Gladstone comes to confusion in the effort to confound him. Mr Babington partly fails, to begin with, because he was plainly a Churchman, albeit a learned one, fighting for his Church. Where Macaulay said that not one living in *fifty* was enough to support a family, Mr Babington made a point of Eachard's loosely-worded admission that perhaps one in *forty* was well paid. He would not see that what Macaulay said might be true of a hundred cases where a different account might be true of ten. No more than to Macaulay did it occur to him that the state and status of the clergy may have been very different in different parts of the country. He was much more concerned to clear the Church, as

Church, of a supposed stigma than to clear up the historical fact. Still, had Buckle seen his book, he would doubtless have admitted that it too was a work of industrious research, and that it corrected Macaulay on two points; and he would in that case have modified his "everything." But as regards even Buckle's endorsation (which is the motive for the foregoing discussion) there is very little modification to be called for. He referred broadly to "the contempt into which the clergy fell in the reign of Charles II.;" and this general contempt is beyond dispute. Even Mr Babington noted how South, wit as he was and high as he stood, had felt the sting of this common contempt, and sought to retaliate. He quotes the sermon on the confirmation of the Bishop of Rochester in 1666, in which occurs the passage: "Call a man *Priest* or *Parson*, and you set him, in some men's esteem, ten degrees below his own *Servant*."<sup>1</sup> But this is only one of many utterances of South's to similar or stronger effect. In this particular discourse, to begin with, dealing with "two usual grounds of the Contempt men cast upon the Clergy," he declares:

"The first is their very Profession itself: Concerning which, it is a sad but an experimented Truth, that the names derived from it, in the refined Language of the present Age, are made but the appellatives of Scorn. This is not charged universally upon all, but experience will affirm or rather proclaim it of *much the greater part of the world*; and men must persuade us that we have lost our Hearing, and our common Sense, before we can believe the Contrary."<sup>2</sup>

In an earlier sermon, that on "Interest Deposed and Truth Restored," preached in 1659, he indicates the pecuniary situation just before the Restoration:—

"Christ requires you to own and defend him in his members; and amongst these, the chief of them, and such as fall most often in your way, the Ministers; I say, the despised, abject, oppressed sort of men, the Ministers, whom the world would make Antichristian, and so deprive them of Heaven, and also strip them of that poor remainder of their Maintenance, and so allow them no portion upon the earth."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Twelve Sermons preached upon Several Occasions*, by Robert South, D.D., 1692, p. 253.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. cited, p. 252.

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*, p. 146.

In the sermon entitled "Ecclesiastical Policy the best Policy," preached in 1660, the note is still louder. On the head of "How the Embasing or Vilifying of Ministers is a means to destroy Religion," South declares that

"The Ministers and Dispensers of the Word are rendered base or vile in two ways : 1. By divesting them of all Temporal Privileges and Advantages, as inconsistent with their Calling. It is strange, since the Priest's Office heretofore was always Splendid, and almost Regal, that it is now looked upon as a piece of Religion to make it low and sordid. So that the use of the word Minister is brought down to the literal signification of it a *Servant* : for now to *serve* and to *minister*, *servile* and *ministerial*, are terms equivalent."<sup>1</sup>

Here is a literal justification of one of Macaulay's strongest expressions, and one most hotly disputed by Mr Gladstone. It may indeed be argued, on the clerical or royalist side, that the degradation described had been wrought under the Commonwealth, and does not incriminate the Restoration. But the question is not as to when the process began, or who is to blame, but as to how the facts stood after the Restoration. Now the posture of affairs immediately before would at least in large part determine their position for some time after. South's language is not a mere impeachment of the lately ruling powers, though he does impeach them. He protests<sup>2</sup> that "matters have been brought to this pass, that if a Man amongst his Sons had any blind, or disfigured, he laid him aside for the Ministry. . . . Many rushed into the Ministry as being the only Calling that they could profess without serving an Apprenticeship." He duly girds at the common Puritan contempt of education, remarking that "we have had almost all Sermons full of jibes and scoffs at Humane Learning";<sup>3</sup> and declaring that the influx of illiteracy "has been one of the most fatal and almost irrecoverable blows that has been given to the Ministry."<sup>4</sup> But he is equally emphatic as to the poverty of the clergy having the

<sup>1</sup> Vol. cited, p. 188.

<sup>2</sup> P. 199.

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*, *ib.*, p. 198.

<sup>4</sup> P. 201.



effect of bringing them under "exceeding Scorn and contempt," and as to its being a "despised calling."<sup>1</sup>

"We have took all ways to affright and discourage Scholars from looking towards this sacred calling; For will men lay out their Wit and Judgment upon that employment for the undertaking which both will be questioned? . . . will a man exhaust his livelihood upon Books, and his Health, the best part of his life, upon Study, to be at length thrust into a poor Village, where he shall have his due precariously, and entreat for his own, and when he has it, live poorly and contemptibly upon it, while the same or less labour bestowed upon any other calling would bring not only comfort but splendour, not only maintenance but abundance."<sup>2</sup>

And seven years afterwards, preaching "at the consecration of a Chapel," he makes it clear that in the heyday of the Restoration there is small improvement in the public attitude toward his order. He begins by rejoicing in the deliverance from the times which had "reformed so many churches to the ground," but he goes on:—

"It is strange to see any Ecclesiastical Pile, not by Ecclesiastical cost and influence, rising above ground; especially *in an Age in which Men's Mouths are open against the Church, but their hands shut towards it*; an Age in which, respecting the generality of Men, we might as soon expect Stones to be made Bread, as to be made Churches. But the more Epidemical and prevailing this Evil is, the more Honourable are those who stand and shine as Exceptions from the Common Practice. . . ."<sup>3</sup>

It is impossible to make light of such testimony as this. No doubt South was a splenetic man:<sup>4</sup> his whole controversial tone tells as much; but even if that were held to discredit his opinion in such a matter, no such objection can be brought to the testimony of Barrow, who fully corroborates him. Barrow's sermon on the consecration of his uncle, the Bishop of Man, in 1663, is a grave but strenuous protest against the common disregard of the

<sup>1</sup> P. 211.

<sup>2</sup> Pp. 209-210.

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*, p. 322.

<sup>4</sup> See the quaint display of temper in the second codicil to his will, printed with his Posthumous Works, Curll's ed. (1717). Compare his persecuting attitude towards Toland, as indicated in the dedication of his third volume of Sermons (1698). He would evidently have liked to use force against his adversary Sherlock.

interests, and contempt of the calling, of the clergy. Incidentally he mentions that the title and office of Priest had been of late condemned on the score that the Jewish Priest was fundamentally a Slaughterer of Beasts.<sup>1</sup> He proceeds to argue that the clergy should have a competent subsistence :

"that, their condition of life be not wholly necessitous, or very penurious, destitute of convenient accommodations, or depending altogether for them upon the arbitrary benevolence of men, which is at best but a more plausible kind of beggary ;" <sup>2</sup> also

"a suitable degree of respect, and so high a station among men as may . . . vindicate them from contempt ; that they be not reputed among the dregs and refuse of the people ; that their persons be not base and despicable, their names made the objects of vulgar obloquy, their functions become prostitute to profane irrisiion. . . ."

And though he draws from his text (Ps. cxxxii. 16) that neither envy "nor the open malice of those that furiously oppugn their welfare, shall ever avail to overwhelm with extream misery, penury, or disgrace," <sup>3</sup> the priesthood of God, he thinks fit to show "Reasons why Divine Providence should undertake to preserve the priesthood in safety . . . and to raise them above a state of scorn and infamy." <sup>4</sup> Is it, he asks, "for God's honour to suffer them to be abused, to want convenient sustenance, to live in a mean and disgraceful condition?" <sup>5</sup> Would an earthly prince, he asks, allow his officers to "fare scantily or coarsely," or "appear in a sordid garb"? And he concludes that "so truly the bad usage of God's Priests, if not directly and immediately, does yet really and truly, according to morall estimation, terminate on God himself, and reflect on his Honour, and prejudice his Religion." <sup>6</sup> And if there be any doubt whether all this is or is not a complaint against existing conditions, the following passage puts the meaning beyond question :

"Consider David's reasoning : *Loe, I dwell in a house of Cedars, but the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord remaineth under Curtains ;*

<sup>1</sup> *Sermons Preached upon Several Occasions*, by Isaac Barrow, D.D. (1678), p. 472.

<sup>2</sup> P. 479.

<sup>3</sup> P. 480.

<sup>4</sup> P. 481.

<sup>5</sup> P. 483.

<sup>6</sup> P. 486.

and compare such discourse therewith as thus ; and judge candidly, whether they have not some parity : Loe, my Attendants are clad with the finest purple, God's Ministers are covered with the coarsest sack-cloth ; my People surfeit with dainties, his Servants pine away for scarcity ; my Courtiers are respectfully saluted, his Priests scornfully derided ; no man dare offend mine, every one may trample on his Officers." <sup>1</sup>

Yet further, the preacher observes that it

"proceeds from an inconsiderate delicacy of humour, or from a profane haughtiness of mind," and not from a generous heart, "*to loath, as now men do, and despise that employment which in its own nature is of all most noble.*" <sup>2</sup>

It is thus to the "honest Devotion" of previous generations alone that "we owe those handsome privileges and those competent revenues which the Priesthood still enjoys, and which are so maligned by this untoward Age, not less degenerate in spirit than corrupt in manners : when all Wisdom, and Vertue, and Religion are almost in most places grown ridiculous." <sup>3</sup> "No wonder, then, when Religion itself hath so much decayed in its love and esteem, if the Priests, its professed Guardians, do partake its fortune." Only when piety revives, "the love and reverence of the clergy will return." <sup>4</sup>

Then the hardships of the clergy are set forth in detail. How, asks the preacher, can the priest be ready and cheerful

"whose mind care and grief, the inseparable companions of a needy estate, do continually distract and discompose? . . . How shall this necessary courage be engendered, be cherished, be preserved in the breast of him who grovels on the ground, and crouches under the depressing loads of want and disgrace? . . . Will men respect his words, whose person they despise?" <sup>5</sup>

And again :

"Is it not barbarous usage, to expect so hard duties from them, to impose such heavy burthens on them, and yet to grudge any sutable comforts, any satisfactory rewards to them? . . . Shall, lastly, the fruits of painfull study, the improvement of hopeful parts, the flower

<sup>1</sup> P. 487.

<sup>2</sup> P. 494.

<sup>3</sup> Pp. 495-6.

<sup>4</sup> P. 496.

<sup>5</sup> Pp. 497-500.

of vigorous age and strength spent in the public service, tend onely hither, to put a man into a state of struggling with extream contempt and penury? If this be not, what, I pray you, is monstrous iniquity?"<sup>1</sup>

And still the lamentable cry goes on. The clergy had always been wealthy "till the late Commotions and Alterations in Christendom";<sup>2</sup> but now they have only God's promise to arm them "with confidence against the present ill-will of those that wish and against the practices of those that design our ruine."<sup>3</sup> Even the present status may be lost: "the obstinate disaffections of men threaten it"; and all the comfort is that neither were the sinning clergy of old "nor shall we be (*at least every-where and for ever*) utterly rejected."<sup>4</sup>

Here then are the reiterated and emphasised declarations of the two best-remembered preachers of the Restoration, establishing to the uttermost the broad fact of the poverty of the clergy of the period, and the general contempt in which their profession was held. And it is a remarkable fact that Mr Gladstone, while censuring Macaulay for not attending to the grave and reverend witnesses in the matter, never once refers to the sermons of either Barrow or South, though if there were any authors of the period whom he might be supposed to have read, these were they. Polemic erudition is apt to be capricious. In any case, these testimonies really end the dispute. The only consideration which can be suggested on the other side is that the penury and humiliation which evidently weighed on the clergy for years after the Restoration, being a heritage from the previous régime, may have been rapidly removed. But of this there is no proof whatever, and the later evidences collected by Macaulay and Mr Lecky are clear to the contrary. South himself at the end of the century thought it well to make bequests of £10 a year to some twelve incumbencies; and Swift evidently saw no ground for exultation in the average stipends of his day.

And in view of all the facts it is now clear that Buckle

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 509-512.

<sup>2</sup> P. 515.

<sup>3</sup> Pp. 516-7.

<sup>4</sup> P. 518.

was right in saying Macaulay had understated the case, since the historian dwelt only on the poverty and low social status of the clergy of the Restoration, whereas Buckle laid his finger also on the profounder symptom of the intellectual reaction against their teaching. On such points Macaulay always dwells lightly. But in point of fact the disesteem felt for the clergy in the latter half of the seventeenth century is mainly to be accounted for on intellectual grounds. We have to ask why their lot was not instantly bettered after the Restoration; and the answer is, as Buckle showed, and as Barrow complains, that their ideas were discredited. The leading intellectual influence of the time was that of Hobbes; and the hand of Hobbes was against every priest, as that of every priest was against him. Charles himself, as Buckle notes, was Hobbes' disciple and protector, and held the clergy in general contempt as for the most part benefice-hunters.<sup>1</sup> As for the upper classes, who might have been expected to rally to the Establishment as the centre of resistance to the Puritans, they seem to have been at least as anti-clerical as the indignant Berkeley found them in the next century.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Burnet, *Own Time*, ed. 1838, p. 175 (*ann.* 1667). Dr Wellwood (cited by Burnet's annotator, B. ii., *ad init.* (p. 61), says in so many words of Charles, "His religion was deism, or rather that which is called so; and if in his exile, or at his death, he went into that of Rome, the first was out of complaisance for the company he was then obliged to keep; and the last to a lazy diffidence in all other religions, upon a review of his past life, and the near approach of an uncertain state." Burnet declares (*loc. cit.*) that "He seemed to have no sense of religion."

<sup>2</sup> When South's furious quarrel with Sherlock over his teaching of Tritheism was followed by the publication of Dr Thomas Burnet's *Archæologia*, which in orthodox opinion "weaken'd as much as in him lay the Divine Truths of the Old Testament," there was published a ballad burlesquing the Trinitarian discussion, in which there occur these stanzas:

Now whilst these Two were raging,  
And in Disputes engaging,  
The Master of the Charter  
Said both had caught a Tartar,  
For Gods, Sir, there were none, Sir,  
For Gods, Sir, there were none.

That all the books of Moses  
Were nothing but supposes;  
That he deserv'd Rebuke, Sir,  
Who wrote the Pentateuch, Sir;  
'Twas nothing but a Sham, Sir,  
'Twas nothing but a Sham.

The writer of the *Memoir of South*, smilingly deprecating the impropriety of the piece, states that "the Reception it met with in being Translated into

What had happened, in fact, was a profound disturbance of religious beliefs, the natural fruit of the Civil War, with its endless divisions and sub-divisions of opinion, in which all shades of political thought, from Absolutism to a surprisingly modern Anarchism,<sup>1</sup> and all shades of religious thought, from Second-Advent-ism to scientific Atheism,<sup>2</sup> were thrown up on the troubled surface of things. The spirit of opposition to the clergy was thus the correlative of the new spirit of scientific research, which spread so energetically from the Restoration onwards, and which bred a contempt not merely for the clergy as a class but for their whole business. Even as the Royal Society tabooed all discussion on "God and the Soul," open-minded men were inclined to turn their backs on the cheap oracles of the pulpit. It was the development of the same movement<sup>3</sup> that in the next century successively exasperated Berkeley and Swift and Butler against the freethinkers. And, on the other hand, it was the later and long-continued effort of the Church (under political conditions which favoured it and did not favour disinterested learning), to improve at once its social and its intellectual status,<sup>4</sup>

several Languages, particularly Latin, by a Curious Hand, at the University of Cambridge, and the presents made to the Author by the Nobility and Gentry, made it evident that their Sentiments were against having the Mysteries of our Holy Religion discuss'd and canvass'd after so ludicrous a manner"—that is, the manner of South and Sherlock, not that of the irreligious ballad. *Posthumous Works of South*, as cited, pp. 128-131.

<sup>1</sup> E.g., Overton's Pamphlet, *An Arrow against all Tyrants and Tyranny* (1646), cited in the *History of Passive Obedience since the Reformation*, 1689, i. 59. Overton's keynote is:—"No man hath power over my rights and liberties, and I over no man's."

<sup>2</sup> The doctrine of the eternity of the universe, which is part of the foundation of anti-theism, was laid down by Hobbes (*De Corpore*), and is found under discussion early in the Restoration period. See Glanvil's *Address to the Royal Society* (reprinted in Owen's ed. of the *Sceptis Scientifica*, pp. lvi.-lviii.), and Mr Owen's preliminary essay, p. xlii. Compare the preface and whole purport of Cudworth's *Intellectual System of the Universe* (1678).

<sup>3</sup> In 1693 we find Molyneux writing to Locke that he has known a "pack of philosophical athiests" who founded mainly on the doctrine of "the eternity of the world." (*Familiar Letters between Locke and his Friends*, 1708, p. 46).

<sup>4</sup> As late as 1750, we still find it recognised by a religious controversialist that

as against a criticism which lacked organisation and pecuniary motive,—it was this that later in the eighteenth century altered the balance of social opinion. The historic facts are plain enough for those who care to see them; and the points with which Mr Gladstone deals count for very little either for or against the real credit of the Church. But it is the characteristic of the theological spirit to treat accidentals as essentials and essentials as accidentals.

§ 3. PROFESSOR MASSON'S. *The Retort of Scottish Sentiment.*<sup>1</sup>

It is a relief to turn from the savours of the *odium theologicum* to the performances of a few important writers who have criticised Buckle, if in some cases with hostility, yet with candour; and of whom some of the most competent have paid a just tribute to his powers. Among the candid critics one willingly places Professor Masson, though his critique<sup>2</sup> is almost uniformly hostile. Dr Masson is a scholar who can condemn and oppose without misrepresenting, even where he misjudges. But his paper on Buckle belongs, I fear, to the criticism that is out of date. He has not, I believe, reprinted it, and it is not meet for reprinting. Fatally diffuse, even were it finally cogent, it strikes a reader to-day as belonging to a bygone fashion of writing, a fashion deriving rather too obviously from those of the early *Fraser* and *Blackwood*—in respect, that is, of its dialectic form, as distinct from its amenity. One can but say that Dr Masson's objections to Buckle's treatment of Scotch history are impermanent; though

"it is a common remark that poor Clergymen are too intruding on their wealthy neighbours" (*Deism Revealed*, 2nd ed., 1751, i. 2).

<sup>1</sup> It is worth noting that while Professor Masson and other Scottish writers have resented Buckle's treatment of Scotch matters, the once famous "*Russel of the Scotsman*" welcomed the volume as "a boon to Scotland" (*Huth's Life*, ii. 203).

<sup>2</sup> "Mr Buckle's Doctrine as to the Scotch and their History," in *Macmillan's Magazine*, July, Aug., and Sept. 1861.

certainly the Professor may claim that they are still supported by Mr Stephen. They were sufficiently emphatic :—

“Mr Buckle has been praised for his summaries of history ; but I must say I think his summary of Scottish History as far as the fifteenth century exceedingly poor.”<sup>1</sup>

“I join issue with Mr Buckle, and maintain that his general assertion as to the Scottish Reformation is a huge perversion, a moral and historical ‘whopper.’”<sup>2</sup>

The truth is, of course, that Dr Masson had never been taught to look at Scottish history with an eye to sociological law ; and that, like most of his countrymen, he had not appreciated even what elucidation of ecclesiastical history had been furnished by such a writer as Principal Robertson, because of being always biassed by a romanticist, nay a mythological, conception of the Reformation period. In view of some things he has written later,<sup>3</sup> one doubts whether Dr Masson would to-day scout Buckle as vehemently as he did in 1861, though he would certainly still be justified in protesting against Buckle's over-contemptuous designation of the leading Scotch Puritan divines as a “monkish rabble.” He might still, indeed, argue effectively enough against the laxities of language in Buckle's treatment of the Scotch ecclesiastical problem : nay, he might convict him of flat fallacy in representing the Scotch people in the mass as truckling to the clergy, when in reality it is the sincere fanaticism of the mass of the people that has given the clergy their power. But that fallacy does not finally undo Buckle's exposition even on that head ; and it in no way affects his generalisation of previous Scottish history. There one says that Professor Masson, with his protest that “in Mr Buckle's work there is no attempt at an ethnological construction of the Scottish nation,”<sup>4</sup> argues to very small purpose. His whole theory of history, as there laid down, is alien to the spirit of historic science.

<sup>1</sup> Art. cited, *Macmillan*, July 1861, p. 183.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*, Aug., p. 136.

<sup>3</sup> E.g., *Drummond of Hawthornden*, p. 375.

<sup>4</sup> Art. cited, July, p. 187.



"What is history for," he asks, "but to recover forgotten names that ought not to be forgotten, to make rich our memories, to connect the life of the present, through an avenue of increasingly strong recollections, with the life of the past?"<sup>1</sup>

It is easy to understand how a writer with such a view of history should object to Buckle; so easy that we need not discuss the matter further. And on the demand for an "ethnological construction of the Scottish nation," it is enough to say that that was no part of Buckle's problem; that on the contrary it was one of his successes to have shown that history is not to be explained ethnologically, but, on the contrary, that national characteristics are to be explained sociologically. On the other hand, it is justly to be objected to Buckle, as is done by a writer on "Scottish Character" in the *Quarterly Review* of July 1861, that he himself displays prejudice in calling the early Scottish Highlanders in mass "thieves and murderers." The writer in question is perhaps justified further in protesting<sup>2</sup> that in Scottish clerical history Buckle "seizes hold of everything which is alleged against anybody," though the critic, on the other hand, is so hardened in orthodoxy that he can see no meaning in Buckle's charge against the clergy of prolonging the reign of ignorance and fostering superstition. The clergy, he urges, fostered the schools, where the Bible was "regularly read," and Latin and arithmetic taught. As for clerical superstition, he cannot conceive what Buckle means, unless he is referring to the Christian religion.<sup>3</sup> Of course Buckle was, with especial regard to its anti-scientific influence and its Judaic gloom, in regard to which he further scandalised this critic by declaring that the superstitions of the ancient Greeks were less injurious to human happiness than those of Scotch Calvinists. As regards "the reign of ignorance," again, the very pre-eminence of Bible and Catechism in the schooling of the mass of the Scottish people has had just the effect Buckle alleges. But while on these points he is substantially right, he is plainly and extravagantly

<sup>1</sup> Art. cited, Sept., p. 383.

<sup>2</sup> Art. cited, pp. 144-5.

<sup>3</sup> P. 177.

unscientific in speaking of the Highland tribes in the mass as "thieves and murderers." If that way of speaking is to hold good, we must speak of the Pilgrim Fathers, not to say the Drakes and Hawkinses, as thieves and murderers. The Pilgrim Fathers took other men's land, as the Elizabethan freebooters seized the ships of nations with which they were not at war. On the same principle, the Normans who conquered England, and the Saxons before them, were thieves and murderers—unless the canon be that success in conquest atones for all things. The Highlanders had been driven to the barren Highlands by invaders from the South, and they swooped on the grain and cattle of the Lowlands by way of natural retaliation on the intruding race. They were certainly semi-savages down till last century; but the ancestors of all of us were in the same state at no very distant epoch. Unfortunately it is not difficult to trace the source of Buckle's feeling for the Highlanders. An unscientific and prejudiced attitude on the race question has seriously vitiated the whole treatment of Celtic affairs in Burton's *History of Scotland*, where, if anywhere, a careful and impartial ethnology was to be looked for. The pity is that Buckle, who could so far transcend the methods of race prejudice in other matters, should incidentally have fallen into it on Burton's lead.

§ 4. DR HILL BURTON'S. *The Endorsement of Scottish Historiography.*

Burton, however, remains a great authority on Scottish history; and his verdict on Buckle, in the concrete case of that history, as distinguished from his general theories, is strikingly contrary to Dr Masson's. He had, of course, much better reason than another for finding inadequacy in Buckle's account of early Scotland, regarded as a historic performance, and he puts it that the sociologist's "Herculean struggles with our own early history are worthy of a better result, and put our own [*i.e.* Scotch] literature to

shame in not having done the task before."<sup>1</sup> He makes, too, one of the most important objections yet made to Buckle's general treatment of European history :—

"We are bound to say that we miss the discussion of a large topic which we hold to stand at the threshold of the history of civilisation in every European country—we mean the extent to which it has been indebted to the institutions of the Roman Empire."<sup>2</sup>

Buckle might perhaps have answered that in his introduction it was his purpose to ignore the remains of antiquity in themselves, and simply analyse the play of living forces, among which esteem for antiquity in general was duly included ; but there is something in the protest ; and if he had completed his book without making good the omission, it would indeed have been unanswerable. What specially concerns us here, however, is Dr Burton's praise of Buckle's generalisation of early Scotch history :—

"We must admit, however, that Mr Buckle has struck out the prominent operative stages of our history—these causes and events which have chiefly given it its peculiar tenor—with more distinctness than any of our own historians. *Nothing can be better than*"—<sup>3</sup>

that very summary of early Scottish history which Dr Masson had pronounced "exceedingly poor"! And Burton records his belief that Buckle's "is one of the few books of the age that will live." He adds indeed the opinion that the "author's fame will be achieved by what he has done by the way, and without reference to the great end of his journey ;"<sup>4</sup> but then Burton, as we have already seen, was essentially anti-synthetic, and does here but indicate his own sociological nihilism. What is really significant is that he is substantially with Buckle on the matter of the causes of the Reformation, on which so many less competent Scotch writers have taken an opposite view. One of his qualifications as to the nobility does but strengthen Buckle's case :—

<sup>1</sup> Review of Buckle's *Introduction* in the *Scotsman* [reprinted as a pamphlet, "Phylax on Buckle"], Dec. 28, 1861, p. 6, col. 4.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*, col. 3.

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*, col. 5.

<sup>4</sup> Same review, continued, *Scotsman*, Jan. 1, 1862, p. 6, col. 4.

"They [the nobles] had no greater general prejudice against ecclesiastics—who were members of their own families indeed—than housebreakers have against capitalists."<sup>1</sup>

This Buckle would probably concede readily enough. The Scottish historian finally was able to point out Buckle's omission to notice Charles's project of tithe recovery as a main cause of the rising which precipitated the civil war; but it has to be remembered that Burton himself was the first of recent writers (since Malcolm Laing) to observe the circumstance in question; and that Professor Gardiner has since had to remark<sup>2</sup> on Dr Masson's more serious failure to note it in his "Drummond of Hawthornden," which was written after Burton.

§ 5. DR HUTCHISON STIRLING'S. *Philosophy in a Temper.*

On the whole, the Scotch historian's reception of the work of the Englishman who had criticised his country so keenly does credit to both, and makes one of the bright spots in the review of the Buckle literature, counting as a sufficient offset on the Scotch side to the loaded dice of Professor Flint, and even to the strictures of Dr Hutchison Stirling. That writer's paper on "Buckle: His Problem and his Metaphysics"<sup>3</sup> is an instructive proof of the possibility of spending a lifetime in philosophic excitation without attaining the philosophic temper; and of the danger of carrying on criticism in a perpetual state of explosive irritation. There is no surer way of becoming unreadable; and there is a risk that what is valid in Dr Stirling's criticism—and it really is valid at points—may be ignored by students out of sheer distaste for his monotonous spleen. I have already said that Buckle is open to censure in respect of his metaphysics; not because, as Mr Stephen or Dr Flint would have it, he was inadequately informed or incapable in philosophy, but

<sup>1</sup> Art cited, Dec. 28, p. 6, col. 5.

<sup>2</sup> *History of England*, vii. 296.

<sup>3</sup> *North American Review*, July 1872.

because, like these themselves, and most others of our minor writers on philosophy, he did not handle metaphysics with that intense vigilance over expression which alone can justify or make profitable any metaphysical disquisition, and thus hindered rather than furthered his purpose, which really did not call for any metaphysical excursus. It is indeed a cause of stumbling to find him gravely recording in his first chapter<sup>1</sup> that "some of the ablest thinkers have been of opinion" that consciousness "is merely a state or condition of the mind"; and I find noted on my own copy, with something of Dr Stirling's explosiveness, my early sense of shock over that apparently *naïve* observation. But at least I went on to note, what Dr Stirling very unfairly or carelessly does not note (though he as a specialist should have had the fact well in mind) that Buckle cites Sir William Hamilton as complaining of "Reid's degradation of consciousness into a special faculty"; and that the whole passage was penned in contravention of an actual common assumption to that effect. Let Dr Stirling look at the footnote references to James Mill, Locke, Brown, Hamilton, Cousin, Berkeley, Jobert, and the physiologists. In fine, the criticism of Buckle's metaphysic, even if it were carefully done by a trained metaphysician like Dr Stirling, would not in the least nullify Buckle's positive work. It is Dr Stirling's own philosophic weakness to misconceive the value of metaphysical explanations of the universe; and one has but to read his sneer at Buckle for giving a rational meaning to Hamilton's phrase "absolutely incogitable ideas" instead of taking it to signify such idealess verbalisms as "square triangle"—one has only to read this to see how profoundly unprofitable metaphysics can be made.

And no less unprofitable, in the main, is Dr Stirling's later discussion of Buckle in his unprofitable work on Darwinism. He sets out in that with epithets and impertinences which only humiliate himself, as showing

<sup>1</sup> I, 14.

how coarse a philosopher can be ; proceeds by way of fresh vituperation and impertinence, as if his own *ipse dixit* on any matter of historical philosophy could dispose of any man's reputation ; joins Hume, Voltaire, Gibbon, and Buckle in a common contempt ; and in the end does but make one criticism worthy of being called philosophical—a criticism of Buckle's handling of statistics.<sup>1</sup> As even that is only negative, as it substitutes no better solution, and as the point has been more intelligently as well as more temperately handled by Mr Venn, whose criticism is examined in the next chapter, it need not be dealt with here. The significance of Dr Stirling's attack as a whole is its aim at discrediting as a whole the work of Buckle, which Dr Stirling is only in part qualified, and not at all minded, to discuss judicially. The plan and execution of his work on the Darwins and Darwinism is a revelation of the essentially personal and passionnal way in which he relates himself to all questions. The character-study is not without interest : if it were only more orderly, more dispassionate, less egotistic, more humanistic, it would be good literature. But despite the admissions wrung from even the special pleader by the beauties of Darwin's character, the whole analysis is bent to the business of illustrating Dr Stirling's private sense of intellectual superiority to the man who attacked the orthodox conception of theistic design, which Dr Stirling acquired blindly in his childhood, held to with prejudice in his maturity, and now defends in a chronic passion in his old age. Of really philosophic rebuttal of Darwin, I take leave to say, there is none in the book. Precisely in so far as Darwin's formulas were empirical, Dr Stirling's answer to him is empirical ; and the constructive empiricism of Dr Stirling is almost puerile in comparison with Darwin's. On the philosophical issue he has no notion of giving a solution of the conflict of the design idea and the primary "sans-design" idea in a conception inclusive and corrective of both ; and inasmuch as Darwin's doctrine of non-design was a great practical lift out of the

<sup>1</sup> *Darwinianism : Workmen and Work*, 1894, pp. 125-132.

primitive hallucination of the design idea ; and as Dr Stirling, with all his consciousness of "depth," only reverts to and restates the primitive conception, he can at best render only a negative service to science, while at worst he renders a very positive service to superstition.

It is worth while, in such an inquiry as the present, to pause over such a phenomenon as the collective performance of Dr Stirling. He is undoubtedly a more intellectual man than the majority of those whose cause he serves. And yet it is the bare truth to say that his final function is to pander with his greater knowledge to the merely ignorant conceit of orthodoxy, and to cater to its passions in terms of the excitability of his own. The eulogies of "Church Bells," "The British Weekly," the "Spectator," and "The Expository Times"<sup>1</sup> are the critical meed of his Gifford Lectures on "Philosophy and Theology," the fruit of a lifetime of philosophising. And the constantly passionate, snarling, jeering, and scurrilous disparagement of all men known as rationalists, from Hume and Gibbon to Huxley and Haeckel—this is still the literary manifestation of an expert zeal for Theism, for Christianity Kantised and Kaftanised into a new semblance of truth for confused and semi-instructed men. Intermittently conscious of the display he makes, Dr Stirling also makes a show of smiling at the notion of a survival of the spirit of persecution. But it is only his sense of philosophic and political isolation that keeps such spleen as his from taking forms more menacing to freedom of speech. As far as mere temper and malice can go, he is the heir of all the ages of faith ; and the fact that in his case temper and malice express above all things weakness of character, and at bottom defect of intellect, is merely a reminder that persecution is always the expression of a low animal instinct. The cue of religious intolerance to-day is the boycott ; and not even the lifelong habit of contempt can leave Dr Stirling indifferent to the measure of moral

<sup>1</sup> See the notices printed on a fly-leaf of *Darwinianism*.

support he can derive from that proclivity among the mass of the unreasoning orthodox.

It is to that mass, or its shepherds, that he really appeals. He makes a parade of having reached by philosophy a position which is merely the sophistication of ordinary religious prejudice. Rationalism he describes in his cryptic Carlylese manner as "*Aufklärung No. I.* ;" his own position is an "*Aufklärung No. II.*," "that can afford, in the light of the spirit, to overlook the opacity of the letter." To which inexpensive vaunting it may suffice to answer that the *Aufklärung* of last century was the movement of perspicacious and unperverted minds away from unreason ; and that "*Aufklärung No. II.*" is the expression of the recoil of hysteria and egoism and verbalising insincerity—of the Chateaubriands and Coleridges and Stirlings—from the straight path of candour and criticism. The only man that to-day is really above the "enlightenment" of last century is he who has, in its own candour of spirit, checked its errors, revised its analysis, and improved on its processes. The man who falls back on the expedients of Kant and Hegel (Dr Stirling realises the collapse of Kant but rests in Hegel) to outface and bewilder common-sense with logomachy, and to make out the innate superiority of superstition to scepticism, is no less morally than intellectually the inferior of the pioneer rationalists, in that, with the advantages of later science, he is less wise than they, while he has never had their spontaneous sincerity. And this type is no new phenomenon. It was not reserved for Germany and Dr Stirling to present to the world the spectacle of sophistry vindicating nonsense when the nonsense was the stock-in-trade of an endowed religion. Priapus and Poseidon, Cybele and Aphrodite, were as impartially shown by the Neo-Platonists of degenerating Greece to be true and adorable "in the light of the spirit," as distinct from the opacity of the marble, when such demonstration was sufficiently in demand. The market for such lore exists to-day as of old. Dr Stirling protests that "*Aufklärung No. I.*" is at present the prevailing state of



mind. He knows well enough that neither Strauss nor Baur, neither Voltaire nor Huxley, has the ear of that multitude whose hired instructors acclaim himself. It is for such that his gusty light flares over the ancient sea of hysteria and primeval passion.

But whether the present danger to science from such teachers be great or small, it would ill become the lovers of science to end in viewing them as they view their antagonists. If Buckle and later sociologists have at times, in their stress of conviction and polemic purpose, forgotten to regard the anti-scientific organism as a natural product like another, it is not for their disciples to repeat the oversight. It is for these to recognise the immemorial coincidence of religious motive and human malice ; and to see in the strangest intellectual survivals a psychological and a physiological datum. After all, there is far more of pathos than of provocation in literary cases like Dr Stirling's. With little or no faculty of self-criticism, he has unconsciously enough noted for us the "self-accusing, conscientious repentance" <sup>1</sup> of Darwin ; and in his comment on Hamilton he has judged more men than his subject :— "Perhaps, indeed, it was impossible for such a petulant, negative, nagging nature as Hamilton's ever to be profound." <sup>2</sup> As the petulant, negative, and nagging Dr Stirling cannot profit by his own judgments, let the rest of us try to do so. And let us remember that it is Dr Stirling, who cannot speak of Buckle without puerile insolence, and who in cold blood (as far as for him may be) paraphrases Carlyle's brief abuse of Grote into a more pretentious and more incompetent contempt—it is this ill-tempered votary of philosophy who writes : <sup>3</sup> "I do not know that, in the true sense (in any sense, indeed, but in so far as he was a well-educated man of good intellect), Carlyle ever became a gentleman,—or even exactly what we call emphatically, perhaps, a man." So be it. And it was that Carlyle who certificated this Dr Stirling, at the latter's request, as competent to hold a university chair of Moral Philosophy.

<sup>1</sup> P. 139.

<sup>2</sup> P. 22.

<sup>3</sup> P. 124.

§ 6. DR DROYSEN'S. *The Protest of Transcendentalism.*

The transcendental school, thus far, in its attitude towards Buckle, gives the impression that the professional cultivation of metaphysics is not favourable to judgment. And a similar though not the same feeling is set up by the reading of the very temperate but very inconclusive essay of Dr J. G. Droysen, *Die Erhebung der Geschichte zum Rang einer Wissenschaft*.<sup>1</sup> That is a refutation of Buckle conducted on purely abstract principles, which never once touches the kind of knowledge and explanation that Buckle gives us. Dr Droysen says of Buckle in one of his less nebulous passages that

"As he has omitted to investigate and master the nature of the things with which he undertook to deal, so he proceeds to handle them as if in general they had no peculiar nature and species, and needed no special method; and the method which he applied to them from a sphere alien to them, revenges itself inasmuch as it leaves him collecting, instead of the calculable formulas in which otherwise it expresses its laws, mere commonplaces, which may have a certain rightness for to-day and yesterday, but in face of the thousands of years of history, in face of the great figures of the Middle Ages, in face of the beginning of Christianity, of the Greek and Roman world, appear perfectly null (*nichtssagend*)."<sup>2</sup>

Here, as so often in this inquiry, we are led to doubt whether the critic really read his author through. If after doing so Dr Droysen asserts that Buckle's method can only explain "to-day and yesterday," one can but remark that Dr Droysen's method enables him to explain nothing. For that matter, if the method had a "certain fitness" in that connection, it would already count for a good deal; but if it be pretended that Buckle did not handle each civilisation from its special point of view, it suffices to answer with a simple contradiction. It is precisely his specialty to treat each civilisation from its special point of view, as compared with Germans and others who treat all in terms of abstract and *a priori* ideas. And though Buckle unfortunately did not handle the beginnings of Christianity on his own

<sup>1</sup> In Von Sybel's *Historische Zeitschrift*, 1863.

<sup>2</sup> S. 15-16.

proper principles, and is said to have talked privately on the subject in a way that is still more alien to his general doctrine,<sup>1</sup> it remains true that his method, impartially applied, would suffice to yield a better explanation of the rise of Christianity than is yet before the world, not excepting either that of Gibbon, which was a masterpiece for its time, or that of Renan, which is so flawed by its endless arbitrariness and inconsistencies that the work must all be done over again. As for the sociology of Greece and Rome, it is equally to be done aright on Buckle's method only. The method of Montesquieu, which is the type of Buckle's, has given us an explanation of the rise of the Roman power, not yet superseded, or even assimilated; and for the Middle Ages, where Montesquieu's method falls short, Buckle's is perfectly valid. A brief sociological recapitulation of the histories in question will make this sufficiently clear.

Following Buckle, we see first how there has arisen the broad difference between the primarily rich but less progressive civilisations, such as those of Egypt and China, and the primarily less rich but more progressive civilisations, such as those of Greece, Rome, and modern Europe. The former represent rich natural conditions, yielding abundant food and producing an abundant population. The latter represent poorer natural conditions, yielding less abundant sustenance for population. But whereas the redundant and easily fed population is easily dominated, the less redundant and less easily fed is more energetic and resistant. Further, the people of facile life are cradled in a cheap content, whereas those for whom Nature does less are more inquiring, as well as more energetic. The former is relatively the primary civilisation, the latter secondary.

Again, the secondary civilisation receives the arts and the ideas of the primary, and develops them. The intellectual forces thus count with it for more and more. In this way Greece, drawing alike on Asia, Phoenicia, and

<sup>1</sup> See the reminiscences of Mr Longmore, cited by Mr Huth, ii. 225.

Egypt, improves on all these in art, science, and philosophy. The increase of knowledge, the multiplication of ideas, is thus seen to be the fundamental condition of progress. But the fundamental condition is subject to modification by others. Thus in Greece the extreme geographical disunity of the country keeps up political disunity, which involves the advantage of autonomy and competition all round, with the disadvantage of chronic warfare. The increase of knowledge, limited by the social system, does not suffice to carry men to the stage of rational federation and universal civism: the bulk of the populations are slaves; and wars are waged out of animal pugnacity, and the desire to obtain more slaves. Withal, inequality always breeds domestic strifes. Hence violent disintegration and ultimate collapse of the dissociate civilisation before stronger military powers. This is always the cause of death—such death as States can undergo. Thus Babylon fell before Persia; Persia and Egypt before Greece, as embodied in Alexander; and, finally, Greece before Rome.

In the case of Rome, the problem has become more and more complex. This again was a secondary civilisation, that of a people not naturally rich. It rises as a fighting State, well placed for a nucleus of a military Empire; and in the constant search for booty and dominion, under institutions better framed to elicit military energy and capacity than any other, it rises to supremacy in Italy. As it grows, it acquires something of the arts and sciences of neighbouring civilisations, but never deeply assimilates them by reason of its predominant militarism. And as the military empire absorbs State after State, and combines the resources of all, its command of a facile food supply sets up at the centre the conditions of popular abjection typical of the primary civilisations: it makes no progress in knowledge comparable with its progress in dominion and responsibility; and it in turn falls before the military force of the northern barbarians.

And now we come within sight of modern history. We see that as civilisation in the lapse of ages comes gradu-

ally northwards, it becomes, save as regards periods of ebb, more and more intellectual. That is to say, the highest science and the highest thought, and ultimately the highest art (painting and music), are found developed in countries whose natural advantages were not sufficient originally to accumulate wealth in the hands of races which had not been otherwise civilised. That is one of Buckle's main positions. As for the intervening period of incivilisation, it represents, in terms of his schema—(1) the difficulty of accumulating knowledge among barbarian races; (2) the impotence of mere administration, of the "protective spirit," to raise the world above the level of its acquired knowledge; and (3) the potency alike of governments and of religion to hinder advance by damnifying new knowledge and inculcating ignorance; the Christian religion having for long operated as decisively as the Judaic, the Chinese, and the post-Moorish Mussulman, to restrict all enquiry and crush new truth. For the rest, he has dealt specifically with the main forces making for and against civilisation, from the Renaissance onwards, in his sections on the intellectual development of France, England, Spain, and Scotland; and his plan included surveys of German and North American society, with their marked culture-types. In fine, Buckle's *method* holds good all along the line, from the rise of the primary types of civilisation—as in Egypt, India, Assyria, China, Peru, and Mexico—to the most modern developments, as those of the United States, industrial England, the British colonies, and Japan. He may not give the right solution in certain cases: he only claims to point out some of the main laws of progress in civilisation; but the method is always valid and always vital. The null methods are those of purely verbal formalisation, so much in favour in Germany, from Hegel to Droysen. Buckle's project of elucidating German intellectual history in terms of its (till his day) leading feature of isolated learning and popular subordination, in contrast with the converse case of the United States—this is a more luminous

suggestion than any of the Germans have themselves given us.

To the mind of the author of the *Grundriss der Historik*, doubtless, the truths arrived at by Montesquieu and Buckle are "commonplaces," though, oddly enough, nobody else, generally speaking, had uttered them. One can conceive Dr Droysen, with his ideas of "Stoff" and "Form" in human history, taking German satisfaction in the verbal profundity of such a German proposition as this: "Personality, as the universal characteristic of man, advances to the phenomenal in the form of individuality."<sup>1</sup> That, I suppose, is a species of explanation of human life by its "own method"; but I still think Buckle did a service in delivering some of us from that species of knowledge.

#### § 7. M. LITTRÉ'S. *The Claims of Comtism.*

It is one of Dr Stirling's charges against Buckle, made with the philosophic lip in its choicest curl, that he was but a middleman between Comte and the world. A similar imputation is naturally made by Comte's more ardent disciples, who are apt to be as ready with charges of indebtedness to their master as they are slow to acknowledge his indebtedness to others. M. Littré put it very positively, saying of Buckle:—"Il n'aurait jamais écrit un tel livre, s'il n'y avait pas eu avant lui le livre de M. Comte."<sup>2</sup> To similar remarks M. de Remusat has answered:—

"Et cependant nous pencherions à croire qu'il lui doit peu de reconnaissance. Rien ne nous prouve qu'il n'eût pas trouvé de lui-même ce qu'il lui emprunte; si n'eût accepté volontairement le joug de quelques idées de son prédécesseur, son ouvrage n'y aurait certes rien perdu en sûreté ni en largeur de vues; il vaudrait mieux si l'auteur eût été encore plus lui-même."<sup>3</sup>

Similarly M. Etienne, who, like M. de Remusat, was neither

<sup>1</sup> Cited in Prof. Calderwood's *Handbook of Moral Philosophy*, from Martensen, *Die Christliche Ethik*, Gotha, 1871.

<sup>2</sup> *La Philosophie Positive* (review), ii. 55.

<sup>3</sup> *Revue des Deux Mondes*, 1 Nov. 1858, p. 19.

a Comtist nor in agreement with Buckle, said of the Law of the Three Stages :—

“Evidemment Buckle ne fait pas grand fonds sur cette vue historique, et c'est à notre avis une preuve de bon jugement.”<sup>1</sup> And again : “Voilà certes assez de différences pour établir que l'auteur de *l'Histoire de la Civilisation en Angleterre* n'est pas un *comtiste* ; suffisent-elles pour le placer en dehors du positivisme ?”<sup>2</sup>

This query, of course, we may answer in the negative with M. Etienne, and also with M. de Remusat, who decides that “Ce n'est donc offenser en rien l'auteur de *l'Histoire de la Civilisation en Angleterre* de rattacher par quelques liens son ouvrage à la philosophie positive.”<sup>3</sup> Positivism neither begins nor ends with Comte. But there has been a more decisive rebuttal of the proposition of Buckle's use of Comte ; that, namely, made by Mill in rejoinder to Mr Spencer's loose description of Buckle as an “adherent” of Comte<sup>4</sup> :—

“Now, except in the opinion common to both, that history may be made a subject of science, the speculations of these two thinkers [Comte and Buckle] are not only different, but run in different channels, M. Comte applying himself principally to the laws of evolution common to all mankind, Mr Buckle almost exclusively to the diversities ; and it may be affirmed without presumption that they neither saw the same truths nor fell into the same errors, nor defended their opinions, either true or erroneous, by the same arguments. Indeed, it is one of the surprising things in the case of Mr Buckle as of Mr Spencer, that being a man of kindred genius, of the same wide range of knowledge, and devoting himself to speculations of the same kind, he profited so little by M. Comte.”<sup>5</sup>

This, I think, may be subscribed to safely, or at least with no fear of giving too little credit to Comte. It is scarcely necessary to add, as against M. Littré, that Buckle conveys masses of information and *kinds* of explanation such as Comte gives no hint of : M. Littré's own objections to Buckle, indeed, recoil upon his proposi-

<sup>1</sup> *Revue des Deux Mondes*, 15 Mars 1868, p. 403.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*, *ib.*, p. 404.

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*, Nov. 1858, p. 24.

<sup>4</sup> *The Classification of the Sciences*, 1864, p. 37 n. In republishing this paper (*Essays*, iii. 69), Mr Spencer omits the passage objected to.

<sup>5</sup> *Auguste Comte and Positivism*, 3rd ed., pp. 46-47, note.

tion. Nor are they, in my opinion, in general sound in themselves. This, for instance, is surely very nugatory :—

“Pour qu'on fût, sociologiquement, partager la civilisation en européenne et extra-européenne, il faudrait que la civilisation européenne fût autochtone.”<sup>1</sup>

Why? one asks; and again and again, why? The very essence of the distinction appears in the demonstration that the primary civilisations, so to speak, are autochthonous, and the secondary superinduced—that civilisation rises by reason of great natural advantages; but that the great progress of modern European civilisation is due to its being the application of the results of an earlier civilisation under conditions in which the human mind is thrown much more on its own resources than it was either in the really autochthonous civilisations or in that of Rome. I am at a loss to divine what was in M. Littré's mind, for his reason-against seems a very good reason-for. Was it that he simply meant to urge that “European and extra-European” were spurious categories; and that one should say “autochthonous and borrowed.” That would be but an idle correction, seeing Buckle took terms which were both literally accurate and convenient.

Again, I can see no cogency in the objection to Buckle's generalisation on the protective spirit that “bien loin d'être une loi, cette proposition n'est qu'un cas particulier, propre à certaines phases du développement.”<sup>2</sup> What then *is* a law? Shall we refuse to speak of “Gresham's law” because the tendency it asserts is not so constantly seen in operation as the law of gravitation? On M. Littré's principle, the Law of the Three Stages itself will be only a “particular case” at some stage of human history. One can but sum up such objections as the errors of a sometimes overstrained partisanship.

It would, however, be a grave oversight not to confess the validity of M. Littré's criticism of Buckle's theology and admit the truth and weight of this dignified protest :—

<sup>1</sup> *La Philosophie Positive*, ii. 65.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*, p. 64.



"Je n'aime point ces qualifications méprisantes dont M. Buckle se sert à l'endroit des athées. Elles sont indigne d'un philosophe. Jetées par un adversaire à des adversaires, elles ne témoignent que de la disposition d'esprit de celui qui les jette, et ne touchent en rien celui à qui on les jette."<sup>1</sup>

There is no answering this. I will only add, without any disposition to make light of Buckle's fault, that a similar kind of protest is just as necessary in the case of Comte.

<sup>1</sup> *La Philosophie Positive*, pp. 67-8.

## CHAPTER IX.

### LOGICAL AND ETHICAL ISSUES.

THE way is now clear for a discussion of some weighty criticisms, directed not so much against Buckle's concrete historical judgments as against some of the processes of reasoning on which he professed to found them. Apart from the metaphysical questions which I have purposely put aside, there are questions of logical inference and of ethical principle which, as regards Buckle's treatment of them, cannot fitly be omitted from our inquiry, the more so as they are raised by some of the most competent thinkers who have dealt with his work. Indeed, as mere matter for philosophic discussion, they are among the most important of our topics.

#### § 1. *Mill's Criticism.* THE MEASURE AND CAUSATION OF MORAL PROGRESS.

We have seen Mill's tribute to Buckle in his answer to Mr Spencer; and to that is to be added the no less generous testimony borne in the chapter added to the *Logic*.<sup>1</sup> At the time of the writing of that work, as Mill remarks, the notion of general laws of history, though "familiar for generations to the scientific thinkers of the Continent," was in our own country

"almost a novelty, and the prevailing habits of thought on historical subjects were the very reverse of a preparation for it. Since then a great change has taken place, and has been eminently promoted by the important work of Mr Buckle, who, with characteristic energy, flung down this great principle, together with many striking exemplifi-

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<sup>1</sup> B. vi. ch. xi.

cations of it, into the arena of popular discussion, to be fought over by a sort of combatants in the presence of a sort of spectators, who would never even have been aware that there existed such a principle if they had been left to learn its existence from the speculations of pure science."

But Mill offered demurrer as well as praise, and it is necessary to reckon with the former. His objection is on the familiar point of the distinction between the "intellectual" and the "moral" elements of progress.

"Some for example (among whom is Mr Buckle himself) have inferred, or allowed it to be supposed that they inferred, from the regularity in the recurrence of events which depend on moral qualities, that the moral qualities of mankind are little capable of being improved, or are of little importance in the general progress of society, compared with intellectual or economic causes. But to draw this inference is to forget that the statistical tables from which the invariable averages are deduced" [this, of course, was not the fact] "were compiled from facts occurring within narrow geographical limits, and in a small number of successive years; that is, from a field the whole of which was under the operation of the same general causes, and during too short a time to allow of much change therein."

A comparison of one age with another would show widely differing aggregates of crime.

"And this cannot but be the case; for inasmuch as every single crime committed by an individual mainly depends on his moral qualities, the crimes committed by the entire population of the country must depend in an equal degree on their collective moral qualities. To render this element inoperative upon the large scale, it would be necessary to suppose that the general moral average of mankind does not vary from country to country, or from age to age, which is not true, and even if it were true, could not possibly be proved by any existing statistics."

If for the moment we exclude notice of Mill's entire misconception of Buckle's meaning as to crime, and the consequent needlessness of his demonstration on that head, this is perfectly reasonable as it stands; but it does not make clear that the whole question between Mill and Buckle is the purely verbal one as to the sense in which the terms "moral" and "moral qualities" are to be applied.

It is unfortunate that Mill did not see this, for he goes on to make a suggestion which, put with a clear statement of the issue, might have served to end a tedious controversy:—

“I do not on this account the less agree in the opinion of Mr Buckle that the intellectual element in mankind, including in that expression the nature of their beliefs, the amount of their knowledge, and the development of their intelligence, is the predominant circumstance in determining their progress. But I am of this opinion, not because I regard their moral or economical condition either as less powerful or less variable agencies (*sic*), but because these are in a great degree *the consequence of the intellectual condition*, and are in all cases limited by it, as was observed in the preceding chapter. The intellectual changes are the most conspicuous agents in history, not from their superior force, considered in themselves, *but because practically they work with the united power belonging to all three.*”

This last proposition, which does not strictly consist with the previous italicised passage, points to a compromise of definition much more likely to be decisive than the suggestion of a friend of Buckle's, given by Mill in a footnote, that the historian simply “eliminated” the moral element from his problem, in accordance with “the artifice resorted to by the political economist.” That clashes with Buckle's own plain statement, that the moral element in man was really unprogressive. There is no logical artifice in the matter:<sup>1</sup> it is simply a question of what is meant by “moral element.” Now, it is plain from the first that Buckle worked on the definition of Kant, according to which Conscience, or the moral faculty, is simply the primordial discrimination between actions as *fas* and *nefas*, morally pleasing and morally unpleasing, right and wrong. As Kant would put it, and as Kantist ethicists do now actually put it,<sup>2</sup> the moral faculty is at all times the same in respect of being a simple spontaneous discrimination

<sup>1</sup> I am assured by a high authority that as a matter of fact Buckle did for his own convenience work out the problem in this way. But we have to deal with the doctrine he finally lays down, which does not posit any such condition.

<sup>2</sup> See, for instance, Professor Calderwood's *Handbook of Moral Philosophy* 14th ed., pp. 59, 65, 68, 69, 74, 114, &c.

between courses of action, involving the choice of the course approved of. As Buckle put it,<sup>1</sup> "To be willing to perform our duty is the moral part." On such a definition as this, it is tolerably obvious that, as the Kantists say, "conscience cannot be educated":<sup>2</sup> the ape is as moral as the man; and moral progress is simply a matter of instructing the judgment as to what is expediently right and wrong. I am bound to say that this seems to me an unprofitable application of the term Conscience, inasmuch as it makes the word amount to precisely the same thing as consciousness, only giving it reference to quality in actions. Consciousness implies primary discrimination; Conscience, on the Kantist view, does no more; and whereas "Judgment" is serviceably permitted to mean a secondary process of reasoning, we must use "moral judgment" similarly to describe every stage of thought or conduct apart from the necessary consciousness that we like what we like; though "Conscience" would serve very well to describe the further consciousness that likings have to be supervised. Needless to say, our orthodox Kantists make endless confusion in trying to work with Kant's tools.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I. 175.

<sup>2</sup> Calderwood's *Handbook*, p. 69.

<sup>3</sup> It would overload this chapter to go into a historical examination of the psycho-ethical problem discussed; but it may be here noted that it has been lately raised afresh by Dr J. H. Hyslop in his Introduction to Hume's *Treatise of Morals* ("Ethical Series," Boston, 1893). That is in some respects a skilful criticism; but to my thinking it does not rightly set forth the main error in Hume's doctrine, being itself entangled in the same error. The fallacy common to Hume's ethics and psychics is his assumption (despite the tendency of his own analysis to overthrow it, and despite his actual adumbration of a deeper view) that "reason" is something different in *kind* from what pass as the spontaneous processes of instinct and inference. (See the point discussed in a paper on "Hume and his Latest Critic," in the *Free Review*, Nov. 1894, pp. 175-176; see also above, p. 132). That this distinction is fallacious, Dr Hyslop partly recognises in one passage (Introd. cited, p. 49); but he himself explicitly endorses it, writing for instance (p. 43) that "volition can never be truly moral until it is qualified by the rational element—that is, until ideas of the intellect inform the motives to action." This definition is obscured by what follows (especially if it be taken in connection with the passage first cited, which admits that "the passions" are "conscious but non-deliberative"); but as it stands it merely reiterates Hume's error, in the act of discussing it. That error, however, did not begin with Hume, and did not end with him; for

Buckle, however, verbally worsens matters by using the word "moral" in as restricted a sense as Kant did "Conscience," marking off as "intellectual" every process of thought beyond the organic tendency to do our "duty"—*i.e.*, to do what we normally want to do. He laid it down that the number of men willing to do their duty is probably always much about the same;<sup>1</sup> and he would seem to imply that there are certain organisms which consciously do not want to do their known duty, these also tending to number always much about the same. A little extension of the discussion, however, would bring it out that these errant organisms have no such clear conception of the given duty as those have which consciously strive to do it; so that in their case self-gratification is virtually the recognised "duty." Whatever "progress," then, took place all round, would consist in an intellectual learning-to-see more expedient courses; people being thus just as "moral" when they have grown altruistic as when they were primarily egotistic. Is this an expedient restriction of the term "moral," any more than Kant's restriction of the term Conscience? I do not think it is.

There is, indeed, one aspect in which Buckle's argument is practically of profound importance; and it is not unlikely that it was in this aspect he himself valued it. The practical or polemic effect of his demonstration is to con-

Hume found it lying to his hand in the psychology and moral philosophy of his day; and Kant fell into it just as deeply, as Dr Hyslop somewhat inconsistently admits (p. 49). Kant comes near the solution when he recognises that moral feeling is just conscious energy directed to a choice between actions; but his verbalistic solution of the whole cosmic problem in terms of subjective emotion commits him to a similar solution of the ethical problem. All round, therefore, he remains in the enchanted circle of theism; and his reversion to transcendentalism in ethics can seem a solution only to those who are bent above all things on rehabilitating theology. The true and scientific solution of the theoretic strife is Mr Spencer's (above cited, p. 131); though even Mr Spencer does not in practice consistently apply his theory. It is indeed extremely difficult for any of us, working as we do with verbal tools made in an unscientific age, to recognise that "reason" is only a complex of "instincts," and that an "unreasonable" view is nevertheless "rational." As a matter of fact, even the purposive Irrationalist must perforce rationalise.

<sup>1</sup> I. 225.

trovert the theological doctrine of progress, which is, that there is periodically introduced into the world a moral impulse, and that from this impulse all progress proceeds. On this view, "Christianity," and not the secondary movement of civilisation among fresh races, has made the modern world; the iteration of certain moral doctrines and theological dogmas has made possible intellectual progress. As against that theory, it seems to me, Buckle's contrary thesis—that of Condorcet, that the world substantially moves by knowledge and not by exhortation, by ideas and not by feelings—is triumphantly made out.<sup>1</sup> If anything in history be plain, he has made it plain that the world is not bettered by the mere impact of moral or other precept on a humanity unacquisitive of general and non-moral ideas; but that massive change of social conduct for good is only made possible by the absorption of intellectual matter. He has helped us anew to see that mediæval Christendom was sinking towards an Egyptian stagnation when the infusion of Pagan and Saracen learning gave it new life; that the further upward progress later has substantially come from the extension of knowledge; and that the hope of modern society lies in a scientific and not in a transcendental ethic. It may well be that his own conception of social causation is incomplete; but it is in the main valid so far as it goes; and it is a vast improvement on the ecclesiastical conception. The flank of the moralistic position is turned once for all by his citation of

<sup>1</sup> I am not sure what Mr Morley is driving at in the following passage, which would seem to imply a contrary view:—"We are told by writers ignorant alike of human history and human nature, that only physical studies can improve the social condition of man. The common sense of the world always rejects this gross fallacy. The acquiescence for so many centuries in the power of the great directing organisation of Western Europe, notwithstanding its intellectual inadequateness, was the decisive expression of that rejection" (*Diderot*, ed. 1884, p. 3). If philosophic questions are to be settled by such appeals to the "common sense of the world," discussion here would be very idle. But I take it that the "gross fallacy," in the matter lies in Mr Morley's assumption that that "common sense" of Catholicism, in which he takes such singular satisfaction, included a perception of the "intellectual inadequateness" of its own faith—*i.e.*, of its own intellectual "inadequateness."

the case of Spain,<sup>1</sup> admittedly one of the most religious, earnest, and well-intentioned of nations, and at the same time the most cursed by the spirit and policy of intolerance. On the other hand, he could show that the simple invention of Gunpowder had had a remarkable indirect influence in undermining the fatal militarism of the old world ; that a sane Political Economy had done more for the promotion of peace than all the moral exhortations in other literature ; and that the mere furtherance of human intercourse by the use of Steam is perhaps the most powerful of all solvents of national enmity.<sup>2</sup> While the clergy were accusing him of recognising only "material" causes, he was thus widening the scope and outlook of mental science, giving a new meaning to the idea of spirituality and a new range to the hopes of idealists.

This insisted on, however, it is still difficult not to feel that Buckle's statement would have gained in verbal solidity if he had professed to show how intellectual gains reacted on moral feeling, rather than how we had moral progress without advance in moral feeling. His formula could, I think, be more forcibly impugned than it yet has been. We have only to consider the sense of the ancient commonplace that peaceful habits softened manners, to see that changes in feeling result from changes of life. Unquestionably there grew up in late imperial Rome, with its mixture of unwarlike and other races, qualities of tenderness, sympathy, and docility, which were alien to the earlier soldier breed : the bloody games were on their natural way to extinction apart from any special action of the Christian priesthood, whose very instincts of humanity, such as they were, resulted from their unmilitary and emotional life and environment, and not from mere doctrinal deduction. Of course the new tenderness, not being intelligised, could relapse on a new kind of stimulus, that of fanaticism, into

<sup>1</sup> I. 187. The previous argument as to the persecution of early Christianity by the good emperors is less well grounded.

<sup>2</sup> I. 202-223. This careful demonstration has been as carefully ignored by most of the hostile critics, clerical and other.



a worse than primitive ferocity ; but it is a sociological fact none the less. Now, if this change of feeling is not to be called a change of moral feeling, the word "moral" becomes almost disabled for real use. On Buckle's Kantian construction, the "moral feeling" alike of the earlier and the later Roman consisted simply in the organic "I incline to" of each case, and not in the specific "I incline to bloodshed" and "I incline to mercy." The substitution of mercy for bloodshed is defined as an instruction of the judgment—not a moral instruction of it, in Buckle's terminology. But how came the instruction about? In the terms of the case—and they are substantially true to fact—the change resulted not from "knowledge" by way of thought and judgment, but simply from nervous readjustment to unwarlike life ; just as the strong modern aversion to duelling in England derives from our increased industrialism and lessened militarism. It might indeed be said that certain alterations of habit *permitted* new lines of thought formerly interfered with ; but still the change would begin organically in the shrinking from blood and violence—from the unaccustomed. Thus the "judgment" in matters moral can be modified by simple omission of usage, without positive intellectual expansion.

Buckle, of course, could have conceded this and still argued that, though habit did something, only ideas, or knowledge, could give morals an epochal lift. It is very certain that an age which gains nothing in external knowledge makes no general advance in wise living ; and that if it drops some vices it acquires new. A fair illustration may be had by contrasting the clement and sensual Cæsar with the mean and ferocious ascetics of early Christian monkery. As to that there is really no dispute among rationalistic thinkers : the whole question is, whether we shall or shall not describe the moral gain represented by *improved conduct resulting either from altered usage or from extended knowledge*, as progress in "moral feeling" or in "the moral element" ; and whether we shall or shall not say that the modified "moral feeling" reacts on intellect

and partly guides intellectual effort. My argument is that we should, as a simple matter of verbal convenience; that it painfully dislocates normal diction to say that benevolence is not moral feeling but only a fortunate direction given to the moral feeling "I incline to"; that the "I incline to," instead of being *the* moral element, is strictly no more fitly to be called moral than the "I like" in regard to sensation; that it is indeed an unreal abstraction, there being no "I incline to" as apart from a course inclined to; that the conscious and deliberate choice of the just course becomes in time the spontaneous tendency; and that spontaneous tendency, by all usage, means "feeling."

In brief, and formally: All moral advance consists in extension of sympathy: and while extended sympathy comes of knowledge and thought, it takes organic shape in bias. And as it is, so to speak, bias and not *biasableness* that is "the moral element" (*biasableness* simply=*life*), the reasonable sociological statement is, not that "the moral element makes no progress," but that it does make progress; not that "conscience" cannot be educated, but that moral progress consists in educating conscience; as the eye is "educated" by seeing and the ear by hearing.<sup>1</sup>

The dispute, we have seen, is purely verbal, as far as rationalists are concerned; but then a constant preventible source of verbal dispute is a literary nuisance. I have therefore sought to effect an elucidation which will leave Buckle ostensibly at one with Mill, as I am satisfied he was in reality. A contrary opinion is expressed by Mr Lecky,<sup>2</sup> who gives Buckle generous praise as "among the very ablest philosophical critics of the present century,"<sup>3</sup> even while challenging his general treatment of morals and his view of Scotch deductiveness. I will only say on that head that comprehensive dissatisfaction with Mr

<sup>1</sup> Professor Calderwood (*Handbook*, p. 69) actually teaches that the eye cannot be "taught to see," as if there were any better way of describing the personal and transmitted development of the eye's powers by special use.

<sup>2</sup> *History of European Morals*, 6th ed., i. 103, *note*.

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*, p. 74.

Lecky's own moral philosophy leaves me able to understand that he can misconceive the nature of Buckle's service to thought while rightly thinking the service great.

If then I have put the case rightly, there will apply only the eulogy in Mill's other and later sympathetic notice of Buckle:—

“He [Comte] is . . . free from the error of those who ascribe all to general causes, and imagine that neither casual circumstances, nor governments by their acts, nor individuals of genius by their thoughts, materially accelerate or retard human progress. This is the mistake which pervades the instructive writings of the thinker who in England and in our own times bore the nearest, though a very remote, resemblance to M. Comte—the lamented Mr Buckle; who, had he not been unhappily cut off in an early stage of his labours, and before the complete maturity of his powers, would probably have thrown off an error, the more to be regretted as it gives a colour to the prejudice which regards the doctrine of the invariability of the natural laws as identical with fatalism. Mr Buckle also fell into another mistake which M. Comte avoided—that of regarding the intellectual as the only progressive element in man, and the moral as *too much the same at all times to affect even the annual average of crime.*”<sup>1</sup>

I have sought to show that the “mistake” as to the moral element was simply a matter of different use of words. As regards the other points, the mistakes are on the side of Mill. It was a pure oversight to speak of Buckle as denying that “Governments by their acts” or “individuals of genius by their thoughts” could materially accelerate or retard human progress. He expressly wrote to insist that governments could do a great deal to retard or to prevent retardation of progress; and he repeatedly lays stress on the result of the thoughts of individuals; though it would be difficult to say what he thought about “casual circumstances,” whatever that may mean. On the second head, Mill, I suspect, was confusing Buckle with Macaulay, whom he quotes in this connection in the chapter in the *Logic* in which he discusses Buckle. As for the last sentence, it merely repeats the very singular blunder made in the chapter in question. Needless to say, Buckle

<sup>1</sup> *Auguste Comte and Positivism*, 3rd ed., p. 114.

did *not* suggest that the "annual average of crime" remained always the same. What he did was merely to cite "some of the evidence we now possess respecting the regularity with which, *in the same state of society*, the same crimes are necessarily reproduced."<sup>1</sup> The thesis was, not that crime remains unaffected by social changes: Buckle could not have supposed anything so untrue: but that it bears "as uniform a relation to *certain known circumstances*" as do the movements of the tides.<sup>2</sup> His doctrine is indeed still open to criticism, as we shall see in the next section; but he certainly did not say what Mill represents him as saying. Thus do we find that the thinker who was among the most cordial in his eulogy of Buckle's work, and who was of all controversialists in his generation the most candid, falls into one of the most gratuitous of all the misconceptions of Buckle's reasoning. The circumstance certainly compels one to hesitate in surmising want of candour on the part of more prejudiced critics, furnishing as it does such a depressing proof of the gift of the human kind for multiplying factitious error.

### § 2. *Lange's Criticism.*

#### MORAL *versus* INTELLECTUAL FACTORS.

The foregoing discussion, in connection with Mill, of the proper force of the term "moral," may save us a good deal of disputation over the noteworthy criticism passed upon Buckle by Lange, in his great "History of Materialism." Lange had been a good deal impressed by Buckle's book, and notes its influence on some German writers; but as regards the thesis of the activity of the intellectual element in progress, and the passivity of the moral, he demurs. The criticism is philosophical and ingenious, and deserves to be transcribed. It runs:—

"Buckle in his famous work on the 'History of Civilisation in England' has used a wrong standpoint in order to prove that the actual progress of morality, like that of civilisation (*Cultur*) generally,

<sup>1</sup> I. 29; also pp. 27, 28.

<sup>2</sup> P. 24.

rests essentially upon *intellectual* development. If it is shown that certain elementary principles of morality have not essentially changed from the days when the Indian Vedas were composed until now, we may similarly point to the elementary principles of logic, which have likewise remained unchanged. We might indeed maintain that the fundamental laws of knowledge have remained the same from immemorial time, and that the fuller application of them which has been made in modern times *is to be ascribed to essentially moral grounds*. It was in fact moral qualities which led the ancients to think freely and independently, but to content themselves with a certain amount of knowledge, and to lay more stress on the perfection of the individuality than on one-sided advancement in Knowledge. It was the *moral* characteristic of the Middle Ages to set up authorities, to obey authorities, and to limit free inquiry by traditional formulas. The self-abnegation and determination with which, at the beginning of the modern epoch, Copernicus, Gilbert and Harvey, Kepler and Vesalius, pursued their aims, were moral in their nature. Nay, an analogy may even be established between the moral principles of Christianity and scientific procedure; for nothing is so earnestly desired by the men of science as abnegation of their fantasies and hobbies, deliverance from surrounding opinions, and entire devotion to their object. . . . In truth, neither is intellectual progress essentially a result of moral progress, nor the converse; but both spring from the same root, absorption (*Vertiefung*) in the object, the loving comprehension of the whole phenomenal world and the natural inclination to shape it harmoniously. But as there is a moral progress, resting upon the fact that the harmony of our picture of the world gradually obtains the preponderance over the wild disorders of impulse and the more violent feelings of pleasure and pain, so too the moral ideals progress, according to which man shapes the world about him. Nothing can be more wrong than for Buckle to deduce the progress of civilisation from a variable—intellectual—element, and a stationary—moral—element. If Kant has said that we are no further advanced in moral philosophy than the ancients, he has said much the same thing of logic too; and this observation has little to do with the progress of the moral ideals which affect whole epochs of time.”<sup>1</sup>

In so far as Buckle's definition of the term “moral” has been objected to in the foregoing section, this criticism is to be welcomed as a countervailing deliverance, though, coming towards the end of a closely packed book, it falls into the defect of dispensing with argument on the definition as such. The argument that the spirit in which a

<sup>1</sup> *History of Materialism*, Eng. tr., iii. 246-7 (Ger. ed. 1875, ii. 464).

man faces the subject-matters of knowledge is a phase of his morality, is acute and suggestive. Beyond this, however, it cannot be said that Lange has greatly advanced the discussion. The question is, what element in human affairs is it that gives a push or lift to the whole moral-and-intellectual life as to make one age demonstrably wiser and more scrupulous than its predecessors? The old answer was that it was (*a*) Providence, working through (*b*) instruments such as revealed religion and men who propagated it. Buckle's answer was that it was the accumulation of knowledge, the collocation of ideas, that enabled men on the contrary to reform their religions, and that mere moral exhortation availed nothing without diffusion of knowledge. Lange, seeing that Buckle takes an arbitrary view of the meaning of "moral progress," instead of rectifying that error, proceeds to formulate yet another factor as underlying alike moral and intellectual progress—the factor of "*Vertiefung in das Object, der liebevollen Umfassung der gesamten Erscheinungswelt, und der natürlichen Neigung, sich diese harmonisch zu gestalten.*" But to call this a "root" of progress is merely to set up one more verbal abstraction, explaining a tendency in terms of itself, in place of a real cause. Ask how came it that men grew more absorbed in the object, more lovingly comprehensive in their study of phenomena, more inclined to arrange these harmoniously—ask this, and the formula breaks like a bubble. It represents no cogitable social process. It were much more philosophic to fall back on the general conception of the total cosmic energy, working in varying channels. But even that conception is not properly an explanation of any one phase of civilisation, since it applies to all alike. We want to know *how* a social variation is set up. And the only significant answer is Buckle's: that (*a*) progress results from additions to knowledge; that (*b*) knowledge is first slowly garnered in quasi-primary civilisations fostered by Nature; that (*c*) it is amassed far more rapidly and effectively in secondary civilisations, where intellectual power is called out by the

relative unpropitiousness of Nature, given the knowledge of the primary civilisation to proceed upon, the time for its diffusion, and (*a*) the consequent and requisite triumph over the repressive forces of religion and the "protective" spirit. We may quarrel with any item in this explanation, but at least it is a specification and discussion of real causes, and as such a guide to political action. It starts with the perceptible fact of acquired knowledge of certain laws of nature, and it proceeds by indicating the accumulation of such knowledge which results from the international contact of cultures, under circumstances fitted to develop intellectual energy. It finally specifies certain forms of ignorance—the ignorance of the laws of mind—which resist the diffusion of all scientific knowledge, physical and mental alike; and it prescribes warfare with such ignorance as the course proper for those who desire to quicken the process of civilisation. From Buckle's point of view, the "*Vertiefung in das Object*" occurs in each age in the exact measure of the enlightenment already acquired. We have seen that he overlooks the effect of mere habit of life in modifying temperaments and ideals; but at least it is more intelligible to say that a measure of acquired knowledge guides and stimulates a man's search for new knowledge than to say that a spontaneously acquired zeal for knowledge makes men rectify the methods by which knowledge is found and co-ordinated. In fine, Buckle is imperfect but instructive; Lange formally complete but actually "*nichtsagend*."

There is perhaps wanted, to complete Buckle's outline, a specification of the psychological conditions of that "scepticism" to which he pointed as the great motive power resisting the spirit of credulity in opinion and of interference in government. The kind of scepticism which simply repels oppression may be classed as organic or instinctive; but the general scepticism which undermines alike authority in thought and authority in action needs analysis. It may be said to arise (*a*) on mere comparison of knowledges, of cultures; as when *e.g.* the comparison of

mythologies led to the rationalising thesis of Evhemeros in religion and the method of Socrates in philosophy ; (b) after the violent clash of religious convictions, as when the religious Civil Wars alike in France and in England were followed by a strong recoil from dogmatism and fanaticism ; and (c) from the influence of one sort of exact knowledge in making men dissatisfied with inexactitude in another department. But, supposing this to be to any extent a right analysis, it is in no case a solvent or an antithesis, but simply a confirmation and completion of Buckle's doctrine.

### § 3. *Fischer's Criticism.*

#### THE PROBLEM RAISED AFRESH.

The points raised in the two preceding sections may become, perhaps, a little clearer in the light of a paragraph of criticism on Buckle in Dr E. L. Fischer's work on "The Law of Evolution in the Psychico-Ethical Field." Discussing Buckle's formula as to the non-progressiveness of the "moral element," Dr Fischer writes :—

"It will surely not be denied that an *individual* moral development occurs, not indeed in all, but in many men ; why then should not mankind achieve such ? It must certainly be admitted that certain universal moral feelings have always been an inheritance and possession of mankind, because they are rooted in universal human nature itself ; but that by no means involves a negation of ethical progress in the course of history. The first principles may indeed always remain the same, but the application, the propagation, the deepening and specialising of them may be a matter of far-reaching evolution. Exactly so is it in the religious field. The universal religious ideas were, so far as we know, common to all races and peoples ; but who can on that score dispute that in course of time there has been a progress in religious conceptions and worships ? It may well be the same with morality, seeing that the two activities have grown up in such essential connection."<sup>1</sup>

One comment which at once suggests itself here, is that

<sup>1</sup> Dr Engelbert Lorenz Fischer, *Ueber das Gesetz der Entwicklung auf psychisch-ethischem Gebiete*, Würzburg, 1875, S. 114-5.



Buckle's doctrine explains the "religious" progress in question in the same way as it does moral progress, that is, as a result of the acquisition of knowledge. Religions can be said to progress in respect of (*a*) purification of the moral dicta and lessons embodied in their literature, and in respect of (*b*) the reduction of their cosmology to partial harmony with increased knowledge. And as both forms of correction can be shown to result from multiplication of ideas in the course of social development, there is thus far no real conflict between Dr Fischer and Buckle. The latter would answer that he asserts progress in the knowledge of *how* to do our duty—which is much the same as Dr Fischer's proposition about the application and specialising of first principles. Indeed, Buckle's thesis as to the all-importance of knowledge might here be strengthened for practical purposes by recasting the whole formula, and saying that all specific moral and religious notions, as distinguished from mere primary tendency to act and surmise in certain ways, are psychologically describable as forms of acquired knowledge. There are properly no such fixed "first principles" as Dr Fischer postulates. A civilised man has no first principles identical with those of a savage: his every general conception is determined by his knowledge. The moral progress of an individual, again, whether it proceed ostensibly on religious or on rationalistic conviction, is an extension of range of ideas in regard at least to conduct; and it is a somewhat comforting reflection that even in the case of a man congenitally lacking in capacity for moral or altruistic sentiment, knowledge may enlighten him to the point of restraining him from certain anti-social activities in which he would otherwise indulge. But this brings us back, of course, to our admission that Buckle had better not have denied progress in the "moral element," but should simply have insisted on the practical consideration that increase of knowledge is the way to increase of moral feeling, commonly so called.

The argument as to an analogy between individual

progress and universal human progress, again, raises the vexed question of the possible "inheritance of acquired characteristics," a large dispute with which I am loth to burden this discussion. It may perhaps be kept for our purposes within the bounds of a restricted problem, namely, whether the primary instincts of aggression and retaliation are not greatly modified in intensity in the common run of civilised men as compared with their ancestors, by mere force of the gradual restriction of the play of these instincts through many generations. If such modification be granted, it will probably be further agreed that it corresponds to the gradual subjection of primary instinct to secondary instinct—at once a psychological and a physiological<sup>1</sup> process—which constitutes moral progress in an individual. In that case we again arrive, by another line, at the conclusion that there occurs a gradual change in the spontaneous direction of human instinct, an alteration of impulse, as well as a conscious enlightenment and correction of impulse, the latter (dynamic) process being in the end transmuted into the static change. Thus modified, Buckle's central doctrine seems to stand on a firm scientific footing.

#### § 4. *Mr Venn's Criticism.*

##### STATISTICS AND NATURAL LAW.

There is one more criticism of Buckle's method which needs particularly to be reckoned with—that which Dr John Venn has embodied in his very able treatise on "The Logic of Chance." This is not the place to expatiate on either the merits or the defects of that valuable work, so continuously lucid and penetrating in its argumentation, so wanting in a comprehensive seizure which shall crystal-

<sup>1</sup> It is noteworthy that the late Professor Christison defended the old practice of bleeding on the ground that in the days when it was commonly practised—down to the first quarter of the present century—high pulses were much more common than at the present time. This would suggest a physiological modification underlying changes in morals and manners. *Cp.* the author's "Introduction to English Politics," *Free Review*, November 1894, p. 162.

lise the argumentation to a philosophic formula, and thus haply bring home to the average or even to the academic intelligence the truth involved. But it is fitting to acknowledge that no more analytic intellect than Mr Venn's has dealt with any part of Buckle's work, and that no one has raised a more pertinent issue in respect of it.

The argumentation by which Mr Venn may be said to meet Buckle at the point in question is in a sense distributed throughout his work ; but the special reasoning on it in his last chapter is nearly sufficient to put us in full view of the problem. Mr Venn quotes from Buckle this passage in regard to the statistics of suicide :

"These being the peculiarities of this singular crime, it is surely an astonishing fact that all the evidence we possess respecting it points to one great conclusion, and can leave no doubt on our minds that suicide is merely the product of the general conditions of society, and that the individual felon only carries into effect what is a necessary consequence of preceding circumstances. In a given state of society a certain number of persons must put an end to their own life.<sup>1</sup> This is the general law, and the special question as to who shall commit the crime depends of course upon special laws ; which, however, in their total action must obey the large social law to which they are all subordinate. And the power of the larger law is so irresistible that neither the love of life nor the fear of another world can avail anything towards even checking its operation."<sup>2</sup>

He then comments :—

"The above passage as it stands seems very absurd, and would I think, taken by itself, convey an extremely unfair opinion of its author's ability. But the views which it expresses are very prevalent, and are probably increasing with the spread of statistical information and study. They have, moreover, a still wider extension in the form of a vague sentiment than in that of a distinct doctrine. And as they are not likely to find a more intelligent and widely read expositor, or to be expressed in a more vigorous and outspoken way, I do not think I can do better than state my opinions in the form of a criticism upon this quotation."

Of the criticism, the gist is this : that the induction as to future suicides is indeed a perfectly legitimate one ; but that "all these assertions about the inutility of efforts and

<sup>1</sup> About 250 annually in London (*Buckle's note*).

<sup>2</sup> I. 28.

the inefficiency of motives are meaningless, *or rather inappropriate*"; that the purposive action of any member of society may as a matter of fact tend either to increase or diminish the number of suicides, and that the form of the statement is likely to encourage the view that either individual or general efforts for the repression of crime are unavailing. "To say that agents 'must perform certain actions,' or 'cannot perform others,' is inadmissible. To say this is to fall into a fatalistic fallacy, for it generally involves a confusion between certainty of inference on our own part and compulsion on the part of the agents."<sup>1</sup>

With the main drift of this criticism I am quite in agreement.<sup>2</sup> I will only suggest, first, that Mr Venn might have greatly shortened the argument by attending to the strict logic of Buckle's proposition; and, secondly, that the scope of the argument should have been extended. The proposition was that "in a given state of society" a certain number of persons must put an end to their own life. Like Mill, Mr Venn has overlooked the proper force of this condition. It is quite clear that, on any strict definition, the "state of society" has changed when any number of persons take such action as is likely to prevent a number of crimes or suicides—I say "or," for it is unreasonable to call suicide a crime. And as Buckle himself certainly held and taught that the state of society can be changed by the diffusion of knowledge and the undoing of bad laws, he held and taught that the number of suicides or crimes could be affected by purposive action. He is thus not strictly liable to the judgment that he explicitly encouraged fatalism and indifferentism. But the fact remains that his language is in part "meaningless, or rather inappropriate," as Mr Venn courteously puts it on reconsideration. All Buckle says of the "irresistible power of the larger law" connotes misconception of the nature of natural law—despite his accurate definition of it elsewhere—and must tend to pro-

<sup>1</sup> *Logic of Chance*, 2nd ed., ch. xviii., §§ 18-23.

<sup>2</sup> The general argument will be found laid down, without reference to Buckle, by Mill in the *Logic*, B. vi., ch. ii., § 3.

mote such misconception.<sup>1</sup> The concrete nature of the causation-series involved in uniformity of criminal and other statistics is well indicated by Mr Venn in other parts of his book. Just as there is an approach to uniformity of proportions in the height and other physical characteristics of successive sets of men in the same general environment, so there is an approach to uniformity in their mental and temperamental characteristics, which at bottom are also physical. Thus the number of persons liable to resort to suicide under special conditions will tend to be uniform—such liability being a function of the total antecedents—and according as the determining conditions vary, so will the suicides vary. These conditions are physical and mental—broadly speaking, temperature, diathesis or malady, and special mental experience. But either the “state of society” is never the same for two years running, or we must say that widespread commercial depression, high temperatures, and influenza, alike leave the “state of society” unaffected. We reach the result that the phrase “a given state of society” is a viciously vague one, and that the phrase “a *certain* number,” almost always objectionable, is here especially so. Buckle’s proposition, then, ought to have been put somewhat thus:—The number of suicides, crimes, and other classes of readily numerable actions are found to be nearly uniform from year to year; such uniformity signifies the general physio-psychological result of all the antecedents; and the numbers are variable only as the conditions are variable. Had he put it thus, he could not have been accused of conveying a false idea of philosophic “Necessity,” or of encouraging

<sup>1</sup> Buckle’s fallacy is severely but justly and cogently criticised also by Professor Adamson in an able paper on “Law in History” in the *Owens College Magazine* of May 1878, p. 197, which is worth reprinting. Its argument, as against Buckle, coincides with that of Dr Venn, but is quite independently and perhaps more clearly framed. The point as to the argument of causation from statistics is again put with epigrammatic felicity by Mr Moncure Conway in the phrase, “These statistics are our creatures, not *we* theirs” (*Lessons for the Day*, vol. i. p. 243), though in the context Mr Conway somewhat misstates Buckle’s general doctrine.

fatalism in regard to social reform. And that he did not put it somewhat thus, but in a loosely rhetorical form, must, I fear, be admitted to show that with all his copious and energetic preparation for a scientific treatment of history—a preparation, perhaps, never yet equalled, in conjunction with such capacity—he never fully realised the importance of a scientific, that is an exact, terminology.<sup>1</sup> I have already urged that his style is unduly declamatory for its purpose. Declamation in style indeed is in itself only, as it were, a putting more breath into an utterance, and there is no canon to exclude it from any kind of writing; but just as the literary and logical disadvantage of the platform speaker as compared with the writer is the impetus to tautology and loose syntax and inexact phrasing, so the disadvantage of a declamatory written style is that it multiplies the risks of redundant clauses and terms, and irrelevant extensions of doctrine. It may be that the element of supererogatory eloquence in Buckle was the relative defect of his great quality of high enthusiasm for his task; and it is indeed not an intolerable price to pay for such a gift; but a defect it is; and the acknowledgment here may save some amount of friction in the way of future criticism, as the avoidance of the fault in composition would doubtless have saved much in the past.

It only remains to remark, as regards Mr Venn's criticism, that he might have made his *reductio* more decisive by pointing out that Buckle's language about suicides, if legitimate at all, would equally apply to beliefs. "In a given state of society," it would follow, a "certain number of persons must" hold certain absurd ideas about history, exposed as such in Buckle's book. Then Buckle's book could do nothing to alter any one's opinions in that "state of society," though to alter opinions was the purpose with which it was written. Either then the writing of the book was an irrational act or it was calculated to alter the "state of society." But if a book may do this, so may a

<sup>1</sup> Though he speaks of the need of it, i. 175.

spoken argument or an action. Then the "state of society" is being altered every day. And if it be argued here that the acts of individuals tend so to equate as to leave the averages little changed from year to year, it only follows that just as, in order to affect public opinion widely, it is well to write a weighty and learned and lucid book, so in order to affect the averages of crimes it is well to aim at organised and widespread and educative action. One man may organise a society whose action will tell on crime, though he could not without that society do anything appreciable. As Mr Venn notes, the mere iteration of the statistics as to the number of unaddressed letters may have the effect of making the forgetful people a little more circumspect. That is diffusion of knowledge, which as Buckle shews is a social force.

There is however one practical qualification which needs to be finally made here ; and in making which we shall note an otherwise unacknowledged element of social service in Buckle's handling of the lesson of statistics. These phrases about the "irresistible" force of natural laws, and about the people who "must" commit suicide, may happen to suggest to some readers a sociological truth of the first importance, and that is, that actions in general are the products of particular brain structures as well as of particular social and other circumstances. Nothing in the old or orthodox way of looking at human affairs was more conducive to misery and moral miscarriage than the religious notion of "sin," as an arbitrary and motiveless choice to do evil in despite of Omnipotence. The retrospect of punitive action, physical and moral, in all history, is a sickening study ; and in the single matter of suicide it is enough to give a scientific student a horror of the intellectual habit upon which all Buckle's work is an attack. That he himself speaks of suicide as a crime or felony suggests that even he had something to learn in the way of sane and humane treatment of morbid idiosyncrasy. However that may be, even the inappropriate and ill-aimed expression that certain persons "must"

commit suicide may have set up, as against philosophical misconceptions, a biological conception of the specific "causedness" of every action, such as would save many a man from applying the methods of the savage to some of the problems of civilisation. Nay, even the apparent encouragement to fatalism may have made for a more effective action by making would-be reformers realise how little can be done by the method of individual moral suasion and individual beneficence, and how essential to a great improvement in the mass of conduct is a great improvement in social conditions all round. Buckle may here have "builded better than he knew."

It is right to note here, however, that Buckle was not bringing the Determinist view of life for the first time before the ordinary English reader, though many may have first met with it in his pages. To say nothing of the more academic statements of the doctrine, the Determinist view of character had been vigorously pressed on the public mind by Robert Owen in the previous generation. Indeed the kernel of each of Buckle's two main doctrines, above discussed, was part of the popular Freethought propaganda of Owen's day. Thus we find the thesis that new knowledge alone can reform society set forth in the lectures of Frances Wright,<sup>1</sup> who doubtless took it from Condorcet; and similarly the doctrine that "man's character is made *for* him, not *by* him" was the watchword of the movement of Owen,<sup>2</sup> which, failing politically, became part of the modern English movement of popular Free-thought. It could have been wished that Buckle, instead

<sup>1</sup> "I have been led to consider the growth of knowledge, and the equal distribution of knowledge, as the best—may I say, the only means for reforming the condition of mankind" (*Course of Popular Lectures*, New York, 1829. English ed., p. 16).

<sup>2</sup> The precise statement was: "That the character of Man is, without a single exception, always formed for him; that it may be, and is, chiefly created by his predecessors; that they give him, or may give him, his ideas and habits, which are the powers that govern and direct his conduct. Man, therefore, never did, nor is it possible he ever can, form his own character" (*New View of Society*, by Robert Owen, Watson's ed., p. 45).



of putting his principles as if they were not previously current, had recognised them as being already in part popularised, and had undertaken to state them circumspectly for scientific purposes. This, in the case of Owen, he might have done better than it was done by Mill, who, carefully seeking to mark himself off from a "sect" which was in bad odour with the middle classes,<sup>1</sup> made a gratuitously hostile attack on Owen's formula,<sup>2</sup> and actually broke down completely in his attempt to discredit it. Mill's phraseology, in a professedly scientific treatise, is at least as popular and inexact as that of Owen, and leaves the psychological question where it was. It may be that Buckle, living in the same social atmosphere as Mill, chose to ignore the popular propaganda in the spirit in which Mill chose to attack it. And yet it is a sociological fact worthy of his notice and that of his successors, that the working class readers whom Buckle, like Mill, was so glad to have, were in large part won for them both by the previous labours of the popular teachers whom they disparaged or ignored. It is time that the credit they did not give should be duly accorded.

<sup>1</sup> See the *Autobiography*, pp. 294-259, for Mill's candid account of his attitude as a propagandist.

<sup>2</sup> *Logic*, B. vi., ch. ii., § 3. People's ed., p. 550.

## CHAPTER X.

### THE ANTI-SCIENTIFIC VIEW OF HISTORY.

#### § 1. BISHOP STUBBS. *Antiquarianism and Clericalism.*

AFTER philosophic criticisms have been met, there remains to be disposed-of the kind of every-day philosophy with which unphilosophic cultured people are apt to meet such a doctrine as Buckle's. There is a popular attitude of resistance to him, as there is or was a popular attitude of resistance to Darwin; and in both cases there are distinguished and able spokesmen for the popular feeling. Various expressions of it have been met with in the foregoing chapters; but it is a frame of mind common enough to deserve a little separate consideration.

Perhaps the most influential, though the least loquacious, representative of the anti-philosophic view of history in England<sup>1</sup> is Bishop Stubbs, one of our most eminent archæologists, a writer who curiously combines exact erudition and much practical judgment with a typically episcopal philosophy and a most unepiscopal wit. It is in his motley volume of "Lectures on Mediæval and Modern History," where antiquarianism and Oxford modernity are so entertainingly mixed, that the Bishop gives us

<sup>1</sup> It is not, of course, confined to England. Professor Scherr, of Zurich, in his *History of English Literature* (3rd. ed., Eng. tr., p. 284), writes that Buckle's idea of finding law in history "was only a dazzling illusion; for history has to do with man, who is made up of contradictions, wavering between good and evil, between folly and passion, who will ever remain inconsistent, and whose mode of action can never be foretold." His one argument is the miscarriage of Buckle's prognostications as to the immediate future, citing the case of Spain. That has been above dealt with (ch. vi., § 6) and is to be related rather to the fallacy of personal equation than to the essentials of Buckle's doctrine. Scherr, it may be noted, goes on to admit that Buckle must be pronounced "a master in the history of civilisation."

a glimpse of his relation to the science or philosophy of history. In his inaugural discourse, delivered in 1867, gingerly eulogising his eruptive predecessor in the History Chair at Oxford, he writes :—

“ I may say that none of you can more sincerely than I do admire the learning, acuteness, earnestness, and eloquence of Professor Goldwin Smith ; learning, acuteness, earnestness, and eloquence never more signally admirable than when employed, as we have so often rejoiced to see them employed, on the behalf of Christian Truth against philosophic sciolism.”<sup>1</sup>

The closing words refer to the moral and historical doctrines of Positivism in general, with which Mr Goldwin Smith had undertaken to deal in his “ Lectures on the Study of History,” published in 1865. These we shall examine presently ; but it is worth while first to consider the value of the episcopal platitude under notice. I have said that Bishop Stubbs is an antiquarian of much practical judgment ; and few students will dispute the point save to insist on stronger praise. The judgment comes out, in a minor way, even in some of his platitudes, as when he lays down for the use of public men the following axioms :—

“ That there are few questions on which as much may not be said on one side as on the other : that there are none at all on which all the good are on one side, all the bad on the other, or all the wise on one and all the fools on the other ; that the amount of dead weight in human affairs, call it stupidity or what you will, is pretty equally divided between the advocates of order and the advocates of change, giving to the one pretty much of its stability and to the other much of its momentum,”<sup>2</sup>

and so on. The quality falls off as the list lengthens, after the manner of the pulpit ; but the words are those of a sensible and thoughtful man. And yet it is within a few pages of that which contains these maxims of moderation that the lecturer has made the above-quoted distinction between “ Christian Truth ” and “ philosophic sciolism,” as if Christian theology, of all vexed questions, were the one on which the one side—the conservative side—is all sagacity and the other all “ sciolism.” The deliverance is

<sup>1</sup> *Lectures* cited (1886), p. 7.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*, p. 17.

a good instance and proof of the way in which the very belief in "Christian Truth" paralyses and puerilises otherwise sound judgments, making men of naturally good parts and judicious heads sink to the level of the Sunday-school teacher in their notions of a momentous controversy. And this is perhaps the gist of the record of Christian orthodoxy at the English universities in our time, the stultifying of one half of the brains at work there, and the gagging of the tongues of the other half. We get a vivid glimpse of both processes in one of Bishop Stubbs' pages. In the closing lecture of his series he tells, brightly and wittily enough, how he first met J. R. Green. They were in the same railway carriage, going to a meeting of the Somerset Archæological Society, each knowing that the other was going, but not yet introduced. "I knew by description the sort of man I was to meet; I recognised him as he got into the Wells carriage, holding in his hand a volume of Renan. I said to myself, '*if I can hinder, he shall not read that book.*'" So they got into talk; introduced themselves; "he came to me at Navestock afterwards, and *that volume of Renan found its way uncut into my waste-paper basket.*"<sup>1</sup> Thus does the episcopo-historical intelligence work, standing between good young clergymen and Renan, and saving their souls by putting Renan into the waste-paper basket, uncut. It all perfectly illustrates the clucking-hen tactics and philosophy of our university staffs, their conventual fright at every form of rationalism, their old-world policy of repression. In Green's case the Father in God does not seem to have finally succeeded, as the younger man grew more and more heterodox to the end, going at least as far as Renan could take him. In other cases, doubtless, the bliss of ignorance is successfully maintained, at least in the university; witness the troops of bound and blindfolded priestlings whom the Alma Mater turns out yearly, sworn to their creed in ignorance of what has been said against it, and before they have developed understanding enough to judge it for themselves.

<sup>1</sup> *Id.*, pp. 377-8.

What such teachers will say of Buckle we can easily divine. From Bishop Stubbs we get their opposition in perhaps its most reasonable form. Deprecating rather than attacking the idea of a science of history, he writes :

"Shall I be saying too much if I say at once that one great objection to the very idea of reducing History to the lines and rules of exact science lies in the fact I have already stated, that generalisations become obscurer and more useless as they grow wider, and, as they grow narrower and more special, cease to have any value as generalisations at all. Is not a historical science liable, if it can be elaborated at all, to become on the one hand a mere table of political formulæ, and on the other a case-book of political casuistry? And, in either case, is it not as a mere political weapon that it is sought for, not as an increase of knowledge, not as an investigation of truth, nor as a study of History for its own sake? And is not the fact that the idea of a science of History finds acceptance, not among practical historians, but among high-paced theorists, a proof that such a possibility belongs to theory and not to practice; that it is aimed at as a new grace for the all-accomplished doctrinaire, rather than as an object to be sought by those who seek after wisdom?"<sup>1</sup>

There are here three independent and unrelated objections. First, that generalisations are vague when broad, and unimportant when narrow. The answer here is that it depends upon the generaliser and his method. Generalisations are indeed worse than vague when made as Bishop Stubbs, for instance, makes them in his Constitutional History, where, after setting forth the extreme moral and intellectual depression of civilisation in England after the Wars of the Roses, he thus accounts for the renaissance :—

"Here, as everywhere else, *the evil is destroying itself*; and the *remaining good, lying deep down* and having yet to wait long before it reaches the surface, is already striving toward the sunlight that is to come. *The good is to come out of the evil; the evil is to compel its own remedy*: the good does *not* spring from it, but is drawn up through it. In the history of nations, as of men, *every good and perfect gift is FROM ABOVE*; the *new life strikes down* in the old root; there is *NO generation from corruption*."<sup>2</sup>

Thus can a bishop generalise, in the light of Christian

<sup>1</sup> *Id.*, pp. 89-90.

<sup>2</sup> *Const. Hist. of England in its Origin and Development*, 3rd ed., iii. 633.

Truth. Certainly it is impossible to generalise to less purpose: the tissue of childish contradictions and pious ineptitudes, the helpless alternation of assertion and denial, idea and collapse of idea, all ending in blank obscurantism, are enough to make a considerate reader blush for the dignitary so bewrayed. The Bishop himself remarks<sup>1</sup> how "in reading Thomas Aquinas, for instance, one is constantly provoked to say, What could not such a mind have done if it had not been fettered by such a method?" Even so we are provoked to say, in reading his own pages, What could not such a judgment have done if it had not been addled by such a theology? That is what orthodoxy still does for us. But a free man is not doomed to any such self-humiliation; and Buckle at his worst never comes within sight of it.

Nor is it true that the historical rationalist is necessarily or primarily a partisan, though it is true that we all run risks of becoming partisans. Mr Spencer makes us feel as much. But no doctrinaire could well subordinate investigation to thesis, or criticism to prejudice, so completely as Bishop Stubbs himself does in the passage quoted. At a stand in his science, for sheer lack of scientific reflection, he visibly falters in fear of being heretical, crosses himself, retracts, and falls back on the philosophy of the nursery and the formulas of the pulpit.

As for the objection that the "practical" investigators do not give us large generalisations, it answers itself. We do not expect them to. They are what they are; and they do not generalise history because they cannot. It is no shame to them whatever: they play their own useful and indispensable part; and if only they did not seek to sneer at more comprehensive thinkers as "high-paced theorists," there would be no call to remark on their limitations. But we do not expect constitutional archæologists and editors of collections of State papers to interpret for us universal history, any more than we expect Darwins and Haeckels to practise as veterinary surgeons. As for

<sup>1</sup> *Lectures* cited, p. 90.

phrases about the all-accomplished doctrinaire, they merely recoil on the user when we find that he, the "practical" grubber, is as doctrinary as anybody else, if not more so, only doctrinary as a rule in the jejune and worthless way of the rule-of-thumb people of all ages, formulating primeval prejudice and tradition, and calling it wisdom. "The most precious Histories," says the Bishop,<sup>1</sup> "are those in which we read the successive stages of God's dispensations with man." So long as we do but doctrinate thus, we cannot be too "high-paced" or doctrinaire for the rulers of our universities.

The rest of Bishop Stubbs' arguments on the point are beside the case, as regards Buckle. No one disputes that "the scientific triumphs of genius all imply minute knowledge as well as the power of grasping the idea." Buckle expressly demanded of the historian that he should study not merely annals and State papers, but the physical, mental, and social sciences; and wherever he treats an epoch or episode in detail, he exhibits an abundance of minute knowledge. He may fall short at times, like all men and all bishops; he had his predilections; but he cannot be accused of not duly accumulating knowledge before generalising. In this respect he stands secure where Comte is open to the most damaging criticism. Some of Bishop Stubbs' words,<sup>2</sup> however, seem to imply the old

<sup>1</sup> *Lectures* cited, p. 83.

<sup>2</sup> It may be worth while to contrast the attitude of Bishop Stubbs with that of a practical man of science of an earlier generation. In an address delivered in 1826 to the Zoological Club of the Linnæan Society by Mr J. E. Bichenor, Secretary of the Society, there occur these passages: "I would direct your attention to the absolute necessity that has arisen for generalising the innumerable particulars of which the science of zoology is now composed. . . . Mathematics in the middle of the 17th century, as we learn from Dr Wallis, the astronomical professor at Oxford, was almost entirely in the hands of those who were practically benefited by its assistance. *It presented no general truths of sufficient importance to interest the students around him in learning the elements.* . . . The tables have since been turned by the generalising powers of a Newton and a Laplace. . . . Society is obviously divided into these two classes—those who are engaged in the details, and those who are employed in the pursuit of general principles. They may be perceived among the highest and the lowest occupations of mankind, each class possessing its

fallacy, which we have seen so unhappily manipulated by Mr Simcox, that unless a man do all the preliminary grubbing for himself his opinion is valueless. "Sometimes," he writes,<sup>1</sup> "men classify the specimens which other men have collected, and claim the character of philosophers without any direct acquaintance with materials at all." It is not clear what is here meant by "materials." If it means, say, that he who would generalise the history of England must read old charters in MS., as the Bishop has done, and is not entitled to use the Bishop's collection, or to found on the data collected in the Bishop's great history, it is extravagance. On that view there never has been a philosopher of history, and there never will be. No man can combine a dozen specialties and be a great generaliser besides. If, again, the Bishop merely means that the generalising thinker must vigilantly study the materials accumulated by the specialists, there is no dispute. And in the end, after his mainly captious and, as the lawyers say, "vexatious" treatment of the subject, the Bishop in a second lecture, delivered three days afterwards, glancing at the question "whether there is or is not a science of History," remarks, "I believe that in the reasonable and intelligible sense of the word there is such a science."<sup>2</sup> It may be

own peculiar merits. . . . The same turn of mind which is friendly to the pursuit of the detail is seldom equally eminent in the cultivation of general truths. . . . I do wish to see Naturalists following Nature through all her varieties with a view to generalise as well as to particularise; to relieve the memory from the overwhelming multitude of names which the discovery of new species has imposed; and to compress the results into a size adapted to the human capacity. This may safely be pronounced to be among the highest efforts of a created intelligence" (Address cited, pp. 26-29). Compare the similar words of Professor Patrick Geddes, written in our own day: "As [the botanist's] herborisations have become keener and of more minute research, his herbarium labours more vast and detailed, his laboratory and microscope more engrossing, and their new problems more intricate, his library, too, more incredibly voluminous, even his green-houses better filled, *his real intimacy with living nature as a whole has often diminished rather than increased.* . . ." ("Chapters in Modern Botany," 1893, p. 144). These declarations of practical workers in science are at one with the spirit of Buckle's words quoted in Chap. xiii. hereinafter, and with the words of Shelley there cited.

<sup>1</sup> *Id.*, p. 92.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*, p. 97.



that his "reasonable and intelligible sense" would be admitted by him to cover only such reflections as that above quoted on the English renaissance after the Wars of the Roses. In that case we can but leave the question to the general reason and intelligence; with the ready admission that what the Bishop on the same page goes on to say as to the *art* of writing history is as weighty and instructive as his other remarks, before cited, are otherwise.

§ 2. MR GOLDWIN SMITH. *Orthodox Pragmatism.*

In Mr Goldwin Smith we have a very different product of English university culture and religious bias. To describe his status would be extremely difficult. He has been welcomed alternately on both sides of the main controversy in politics as a polemist, and he is trusted on neither side; while as regards his contributions to the philosophy of history it does not appear that they satisfy even the official university sense.<sup>1</sup> We have seen above<sup>2</sup> how much of learning he brought to the tasks of a professorship of history; and I have elsewhere<sup>3</sup> offered an estimate of the degree of candour and judgment he has more recently brought to bear on a great political problem. Without, however, going to his scattered writings for the many illustrations they supply of his moral idiosyncracies, we may gather enough as to his bias and method from those early lectures for which Bishop Stubbs has so peculiarly praised him.

In the preface to his two professorial Lectures on the Study of History (1861), Mr Smith thus shows how he is prepared to deal with some matters of grave argument:—

"It has been said that Christianity must be retrograde, because instead of looking forward it looks back to Christ. It is not easy to see why it is more retrograde to *look back to the source of a higher spiritual life* in Christ than it is to *look back to the source of all life* in Mr Darwin's monad.

<sup>1</sup> See Pattison's *Memoirs*, p. 246, as to his early repute as a revolutionary radical at the university.

<sup>2</sup> *Introd.*, p. 9.

<sup>3</sup> Article on "The Saxon and the Celt," *Free Review*, Sept. 1894.

If this means anything, it means that Christ is looked back to as a minute beginning of a spiritual life which has greatly developed since his time, has far transcended his, and will transcend it yet further. But that is not at all what is meant in the proposition assailed; and, what is more, it is not what is believed by Mr Goldwin Smith. In his later lecture on "Some Supposed Consequences of the Doctrine of Historical Progress,"<sup>1</sup> he lays it down, at length and with reiteration, that the character of the Jesus of the Gospels stands out "in unapproached purity as well as in unapproached perfection of moral excellence." He there vends the often-repeated and monstrous falsism that the character of the Gospel Jesus is a type "entirely free from all that entered into the special personalities of the age." The assertion is not worth rebuttal in this place, but Mr Smith apparently believes it. Then his previous language about the "source of a higher spiritual life" in analogy with the monad is the language of a not very scrupulous sophist; and it needs the express applause of Bishop Stubbs to convince us that an argument so conducted is professionally held to be a service to "Christian Truth."

We are now prepared to follow intelligently Mr Smith's treatment of the question as to the philosophy of history. He is primarily a vindicator of the narrow orthodoxy in which he had been brought up; and his aim as professor of history was to bring stray young thinkers back to the bosom of the Athanasian Creed.

"It is true," he admits,<sup>2</sup> with something of the skill of the servants of the Church of Rome, "that Christianity has something of a mysterious character. But that, on this account, it must interfere with intellectual freedom, or anything for which intellectual freedom is requisite, can hardly be said, when Hume himself emphatically speaks of the world as a mystery, and when the acutest writers of the same school at the present day find it necessary to gratify a true intellectual instinct by reminding us that after all, beyond that which science makes known to us, there lies the mysterious unknown."

That is to say, because Hume and Spencer leave the in-

<sup>1</sup> 1861, pp. 15-21.

<sup>2</sup> Lecture last cited, p. 32.

telligence free by asserting the mystery of an Unknown or Unknowable, Christianity equally leaves it free by making certain positive and incredible statements of pretended fact, and calling these statements mysteries. It is from this footing of intellectual conviction and logical method that Professor Smith addressed himself to the overthrow of the scientific conception of law in history. He counters it explicitly enough :—

“History cannot furnish its own inductive law. An induction, to be sound, must take in, actually or virtually, all the facts. But history is unlike all other studies in this, that she never can have, actually or virtually, all the facts before her. What is past she knows in part ; what is to come she knows not, and can never know. The scroll from which she reads is but half-unrolled : and what the other half contains, what even the next line contains, *no one has yet been able to foretell*. Prediction, the crown of all science, the new science of Men and History has not ventured to put on. *That prerogative, which is the test of her legitimacy, she has not yet ventured to exert.*”<sup>1</sup>

We shall shortly see what measure of truth there is in the first italicised passage, and what logical force there is in the preceding passage ; but it may here be worth while, as testing the intellectual sincerity of the lecturer, to compare his professed principle with his practice. It is in a lecture delivered shortly after that above quoted from that we find him saying,

“*The Papacy will perish ; and in it will perish the great obstacle to the reconciliation and re-union of Christendom. Nor will it perish alone. It will draw down with it in its fall, sooner or later, all those causes of division which have subsisted by mere antagonism to it. . . .*”<sup>2</sup>

We know nothing of what is to come ; but we can confidently assure the same students to whom we make that statement that the Papacy will perish, and that Christendom will then and therefore unite. If history has not put on the crown of prediction, pragmatism and professor-

<sup>1</sup> *The Study of History : Two Lectures.* By Goldwin Smith, M.A., Regius Professor of Modern History in the University of Oxford, 1861, p. 19.

<sup>2</sup> *On Some Supposed Consequences of the Doctrine of Historical Progress.* A Lecture. By Goldwin Smith, Regius Professor &c., 1861, p. 46.

ism are seen to have been less diffident. But indeed we need not go to another of Mr Smith's lectures to illustrate his habits of mind. In the first of his lectures, a few pages before the passage quoted, we have this :—

“Nor will it avail the constructors of a science of man to cite *the moral certainty with which we predict the conduct of men or nations whose characters are settled. This settled character was formed by action, and the action by which it was formed was free ; so that the uncertain element which baffles science is not got rid of, but only thrown back over a history or a life.*”<sup>1</sup>

Here a “moral certainty” of prediction in certain cases is admitted. We need not re-enter here into the old question of free-will, on which Mr Smith repeats the commonplaces of orthodoxy : it suffices to note his incapacity to reason consistently for four pages together. The contradiction is repeated a little further on,<sup>2</sup> in the admission concerning the “Moral and Economical Sciences” that

“In themselves, and till they descend into the actions of particular men or nations, these sciences are exact, and *give full play to all those methods of scientific reasoning of which, once more, physical science seems to be the great school.*”

Yet after thus repeatedly admitting the principle which, apparently for sheer lack of comprehension, he assumes himself to be overthrowing, Mr Smith in the second of his “Two Lectures” proceeds once more to challenge humanist science in these terms :—

“But why argue without end about that which we may bring to a practical test ? If the master-science has been discovered, let it shew forth its power and we will believe. Let those who have studied the science of Man and History predict a single event by means of their science ; let them even write a single page of history on its method ; let them bring up one child by the rules for directing and modifying moral development which it gives. There is another and a higher test. Has the true key to human character been found ? Then let a nobler type of character be produced. Apply the science of humanity and produce a better man.”<sup>3</sup>

The closing sentences will serve somewhat like the before-quoted passage on “looking back to Christ” to

<sup>1</sup> Two Lectures cited, p. 15.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*, p. 27.

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*, p. 45.

illustrate Mr Smith's measure of philosophic candour; but the whole paragraph will also serve to illustrate afresh his peculiar lack of sincerity. In his "Inaugural Lecture"<sup>1</sup> he writes:—

"Can education teach the rich to do their duty? . . . experience says it can. Look round to the really well-educated men of property of your acquaintance. Are they not, as a body, good and active members of society, promoters of good social objects, and, if land-owners, resident, and endeavouring to earn the rent the labour of the people pays them, by doing good among the people?"

The eulogy of landlords may go for what it is worth; but the proposition as to the power of education is a claim that planned education can teach men of property to do their duty; and if it holds good, Mr Smith's challenge to positivists to bring up a child on their plan is a mere perversity. They might make the sufficient answer that James Mill brought up in John Mill a better man than Mr Smith.

The simple process of thus comparing passages of his works, I believe, will suffice to dispose of Mr Smith as a reasoner on historical science.<sup>2</sup> He has really no philosophical footing whatever, and does but catch spasmodically at a number of incoherent pleas by way of offering so many objections to the doctrine that history can be reduced to general laws. And those who have read his own constructive suggestions in elucidation of history know how primitively theological and empirical he can be in that way.<sup>3</sup> If, however, there be any point in his remaining

<sup>1</sup> *An Inaugural Lecture*. By Goldwin Smith, Regius Professor &c., 1859, p. 16.

<sup>2</sup> On points of detail he makes only one or two incidental references to Buckle. One is a gross misrepresentation. He asserts, in his lecture on Pitt (*Three English Statesmen*, People's ed. 1867, p. 81), in regard to Buckle's view of Burke's reaction at the French Revolution: "Mr Buckle thinks that Burke, who up to this time had been the first of statesmen, *now suddenly went mad*." It would be hard to pervert a writer's words more outrageously without deliberate intent. Buckle said neither the "suddenly" nor the "mad." See his real account, i. 467-468.

<sup>3</sup> See the lectures on *Three English Statesmen*, as cited, p. 74: "Nor is Pitt's sagacity much to be impeached because, under an unhappy star, he

reasonings against the rationalist attitude, it will be sufficiently considered in the next section, in dealing with the equivalent arguments of a better-known writer with a similar training and temperament, and, for all practical purposes, of the same school.

§ 3. MR FROUDE. *The Method of Popular Rhetoric.*

One of the commonest ways of introduction to Buckle's work, for many years back, has been through the opening paper in the late Mr Froude's "Short Studies on Great Subjects." The historian's Royal Institution lecture on "The Science of History" has thus done Buckle's doctrine a service it was hardly meant to do; for its purport is that a science of history must be pronounced impossible, despite the admitted ability of Buckle's attempt to found one. It is rather the broad bearing of this question, the frequency with which it is raised, than any force in Mr Froude's treatment of it, that makes it fitting to discuss that here. For although the lecturer treats Buckle with marked courtesy and even goodwill (Buckle was only a few years dead when it was delivered), it is on the whole a singular proof of the small measure of philosophy, in any sense of the term, behind the Carlylean historical method. The surprising thing is that, feeling and reasoning as he did, Mr Froude should have treated Buckle with so much deference. His normal way of disposing of a philosophic view or aspiration is flagrantly enough set forth in a statement of his own:—

founded Botany Bay. *Leave nature to herself and she will choose the germs of new nations well.* Wise beyond the reach of human wisdom in all her processes, she *does not forget her wisdom* in this most momentous process of propagating humanity over its destined abodes. Careful in the selection of the right seed for a plant (!), she is not careless in selecting the right colonists. *Left to herself, she selects the flower of English worth, the founders of New England:* when man undertakes to select for her, he selects the convicts of Botany Bay, and taints the being of future communities at its source with the pestilence of a moral lazar-house." When we remember that the lecturer had a little before been telling how the Pilgrim Fathers were driven out of England by oppression, the sanity of his conception of "Nature" comes home to us.

"I once asked a distinguished philosopher what he thought of patriotism. He said he thought it was a compound of vanity and superstition ; a bad kind of prejudice, which would die out with the growth of reason. My friend believed in the progress of humanity—he could not narrow his sympathies to so small a thing as his own country. I could but say to myself, 'Thank God, then, we are not yet a nation of philosophers.' A man who takes up with philosophy like that may write fine books and review articles and such like, but at the bottom of him he is a poor caitiff, and there is no more to be said about him." <sup>1</sup>

This cheap resort to insult by way of refuting his "friend" is only too typical of Mr Froude's habit of thought ; and the facile flashiness of the whole passage is one of the many illustrations he gave of what a man can come to as a thinker and teacher by living perpetually in a steam of random rhetoric. The distinguished philosopher had talked truth and soberness ; the pupil of Carlyle thanks his God—a fetish mainly cherished for such expetive services—that most people *do* narrow their sympathies to their own country. "When a man takes up with a philosophy like that," we are free to say, "he may write lively hero-worshipping histories [with or without accurate erudition], and deliver fluent popular lectures, but at the bottom of him he is"—well, every reader can select his own epithet.

In the lecture on "The Science of History," however, thin as is the literary and logical tissue of the discourse, the tone is one of amenity and even compliment. "We feel keenly about such things," he says of the doctrine he criticises, "and when the logic becomes perplexing, we are apt to grow rhetorical and passionate." It is even so ; we have just seen as much. But, adds the critic, with uncommon accuracy, "rhetoric is only misleading. Whatever the truth may be, it is best that we should know it ; and for truth of any kind we should keep our heads and hearts as cool as we can." <sup>2</sup> And in this case he does so, up to his capacity. Buckle, he confessed, "had the art

<sup>1</sup> Lecture on the Times of Erasmus and Luther, § 3 (*Short Studies*, i. 118-9).

<sup>2</sup> *Short Studies*, i. 12.

which belongs to men of genius: he could present his opinions with peculiar distinctness." The kind of genius ascribed was rather that distinctive of the lecturer than that distinctive of the subject; but the compliment was, of course, none the less well meant; and the lecturer goes on to give an extremely lucid account, in his own words, of Buckle's general view of things. It is worth reproducing here, in connection with the rest of the argument:—

"Mr Buckle's general theory was something of this kind. When human creatures began first to look about them in the world they lived in, there seemed to be no order in anything. Days and nights were not the same length. The air was sometimes hot and sometimes cold. Some of the stars rose and set like the sun; some were almost motionless in the sky; some described circles round a central star above the north horizon. The planets went on principles of their own; and in the elements there seemed nothing but caprice. Sun and moon would at times go out in eclipse. Sometimes the earth itself would shake under men's feet; and they could only suppose that earth and air, and sky and water, were inhabited and managed by creatures as wayward as themselves.

"Time went on, and the disorder began to arrange itself. Certain influences seemed beneficent to men, others malignant and destructive, and the world was supposed to be animated by good spirits and evil spirits, who were continually fighting against each other, in outward nature and in human creatures themselves. Finally, as men observed more, and imagined less, these interpretations gave way also. Phenomena the most opposite in effect were seen to be the result of the same natural law. The fire did not burn the house down if the owners of it were careful, but remained on the hearth, and boiled the pot; nor did it seem more inclined to burn a bad man's house down than a good man's, provided the badness did not take the form of negligence. The phenomena of nature were found for the most part to proceed in an orderly, regular way, and their variations to be such as could be counted upon. From observing the order of things, the step was easy to cause and effect. An eclipse, instead of being a sign of the anger of Heaven, was found to be the necessary and innocent result of the relative position of sun, moon, and earth. The comets became bodies in space, unrelated to the beings who had imagined that all creation was watching them and their doings. By degrees, caprice, volition, all symptoms of arbitrary action, disappeared out of the universe; and almost every phenomenon in earth or heaven was found attributable to some law, either understood or perceived to exist. Thus nature was reclaimed from the imagination. The first fantastic



conception of things gave way before the moral ; the moral, in turn, gave way before the natural : and at last there was left but one small tract of jungle where the theory of law had failed to penetrate—the doings and character of human creatures themselves.

“There, and only there, amidst the conflicts of reason and emotion, conscience and desire, spiritual forces were still conceived to exist. Cause and effect were not traceable when there was a free volition to disturb the connection. In all other things, from a given set of conditions, the consequences necessarily followed. With man, the word law changed its meaning ; and instead of a fixed order, which he could not choose but follow, it became a moral precept, which he might disobey if he dared.

“This it was which Mr Buckle disbelieved. The economy which prevailed throughout nature, he thought it very unlikely should admit of this exception. He considered that human beings acted necessarily from the impulse of outward circumstances upon their mental and bodily condition at any given moment. Every man, he said, acted from a motive ; and his conduct was determined by the motive which affected him most powerfully. Every man naturally desires what he supposes to be good for him ; but to do well, he must know well. He will eat poison, so long as he does not know that it is poison. Let him see that it will kill him, and he will not touch it. The question is not of moral right and wrong. Once let him be thoroughly made to feel that the thing is destructive, and he will leave it alone by the law of his nature. His virtues are the result of knowledge ; his faults, the necessary consequence of the want of it. A boy desires to draw. He knows nothing about it ; he draws men like trees or houses, with their centre of gravity anywhere. He makes mistakes because he knows no better. We do not blame him. Till he is better taught he cannot help it. But his instruction begins. He arrives at straight lines ; then at solids ; then at curves. He learns perspective, and light and shade. He observes more accurately the forms which he wishes to represent. He perceives effects, and he perceives the means by which they are produced. He has learned what to do ; and, in part, he has learned how to do it ; his after-progress will depend on the amount of force which his nature possesses. But all this is as natural as the growth of an acorn. You do not preach to the acorn that it is its duty to become a large tree ; you do not preach to the art-pupil that it is his duty to become a Holbein. You plant your acorn in favourable soil, where it can have light and air, and be sheltered from the wind ; you remove the superfluous branches, you train the strength into the leading shoots. The acorn will then become as fine a tree as it has vital force to become. The difference between men and other things is only in the largeness and variety of man’s capacities ; and in this special capacity, that he alone has the power of

observing the circumstances favourable to his own growth, and can apply them for himself. Yet, again, with this condition—that he is not, as is commonly supposed, free to choose whether he will make use of these appliances or not. When he knows what is good for him, he will choose it; and he will judge what is good for him by the circumstances which have made him what he is.

“And what he would do, Mr Buckle supposed that he always had done. His history had been a natural growth as much as the growth of the acorn. His improvement had followed the progress of his knowledge; and, by a comparison of his outward circumstances with the condition of his mind, his whole proceedings on this planet, his creeds and constitutions, his good deeds and his bad, his arts and his sciences, his empires and his revolutions, would be found all to arrange themselves into clear relations of cause and effect.”<sup>1</sup>

The condensation is somewhat violent in parts, and the phrasing at times misleading, but it will serve as a basis on which to meet the criticism with which Mr Froude follows it up. He asks:—

“But are circumstances everything? That is the whole question. A science of history, if it is more than a misleading name, implies that the relation between cause and effect holds in human things as completely as in all others, that the origin of human actions is not to be looked for in mysterious properties of the mind, but in influences which are palpable and ponderable.”<sup>2</sup>

Here already the argument is astray: the antithesis is illegitimate: the word “mysterious” leaves one term of it ambiguous, and the words “palpable and ponderable” vitiate the other. But this is more to the purpose:—

“What are the conditions of a science? and when may any subject be said to enter the scientific stage? I suppose when the facts of it begin to resolve themselves into groups; when phenomena are no longer isolated experiences, but appear in connection and order; when, after certain antecedents, certain consequences are uniformly seen to follow; when facts enough have been collected to furnish a basis for conjectural explanation, and when conjectures have so far ceased to be utterly vague that it is possible in some degree to foresee the future by them.”<sup>3</sup>

To this we may give a qualified assent. Buckle himself speaks more than once of “the great and final object of all science, namely, the power of predicting events.”<sup>4</sup> It is the

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 4-8.

<sup>2</sup> P. 12.

<sup>3</sup> Pp. 13-14

<sup>4</sup> I. 171, *note*; ii. 373, *note*.

doctrine of Hume,<sup>1</sup> who held that politics could be reduced to a science<sup>2</sup>; and it has a general currency, in one form or the other, though neither Buckle's nor Hume's is free from objection. It is substantially true that nearly every science properly so called carries with it in some degree the power of prediction. Mr Froude's argument accordingly takes in part the simple form that since in history "the phenomena never repeat themselves" as they do in astronomy, there can be no science of history. He even rests the contention on the correlative ground that we cannot recover certain lost facts. "Will a time ever be when the lost secret of the foundation of Rome can be recovered by historic laws? If not, where is our science?"<sup>3</sup> Alternatively, he takes the possibility of predicting a general phenomenon. "Can you imagine a science which would have *foretold* such movements" as Mohammedanism and Buddhism? And again:

"Could Tacitus have looked forward nine centuries to the Rome of Gregory VII., could he have beheld the representative of the majesty of the Cæsars holding the stirrup of the representative of the Pontiff of that vile and execrated sect, the spectacle would scarcely have appeared to him the fulfilment of a rational expectation, or an intelligible result of the causes in operation round him. Tacitus, indeed, was born before the science of history; but would M. Comte have seen any more clearly?"<sup>4</sup>

This, which will unfortunately pass with many as a confutation, is in no proper sense a process of argument. To say that if Tacitus could have done what Tacitus could not possibly have done, Tacitus would have been bewildered, is no argument against the thesis that we may so reduce historical facts to laws as to be able to predict future events. The plan of taking the lapse of nine centuries, to begin with, is a mere device to force a verdict. In all probability Comte did not foretell anything as it will really

<sup>1</sup> "The only immediate utility of all sciences is to teach us how to control and regulate future events by their causes."—*Inquiry concerning Human Understanding*, Sect. vii. Part 2.

<sup>2</sup> *Essays*, iii., and *Inquiry* cited, Sect. xii. Part 3.

<sup>3</sup> P. 17.

<sup>4</sup> Pp. 18-19.

be nine centuries hence: he made gross blunders in foretelling what would happen in this generation. Similarly Condorcet, who laid down reasonably enough the principles of historic prediction,<sup>1</sup> made forecasts which nobody now admits to be reasonable. But that does not prove that there can be no science of history, no scientific prediction of social and political events.

Let us first put a little order in our conception of prediction and "retrodiction" as they indisputably take place in the settled sciences. Astronomy can predict certain events, as eclipses, with great precision; and it can similarly assert with great precision past events of which we have no direct testimony. But beyond a certain point astronomy becomes much vaguer. It is still in the stage of hypothesis even as regards the origin and age of the solar system, and as regards the date of its predicted reintegration: it is entirely hypothetic as regards the centre round which our solar system as a whole is moving; and beyond that it can hardly be said to offer even a hypothesis about the universe.<sup>2</sup>

Chemistry, again, is a very exact science within certain limits; and may be said to predict many things with great certainty. But many things it only predicts conditionally. That at a given temperature and pressure water will boil, is an exact and safe proposition; but in many experiments of which the principle is quite well known the chemist cannot be at all sure that what he wants to do will come off, by reason of the variability of certain of the conditions. Scientific prediction, then, even in the most exact of the main physical sciences, is strictly limited and conditional.

As regards Geology, even Mr Froude makes a confused admission in a footnote, which plainly evades his difficulty:—

<sup>1</sup> *Esquisse d'un Tableau Historique des Progrès de l'Esprit Humain*, 1795, pp. 16-17. See the passage cited by Mill at the beginning of B. vi. of the *Logic*.

<sup>2</sup> Mr Spencer's hypothesis of an eternal rhythm of integration and disintegration falls under the general disability to conceive infinitude save as a negation of discontinuance.

"It is objected<sup>1</sup> that Geology is a science ; yet that Geology cannot foretell the future changes of the earth's surface. Geology is not a century old, and its periods are measured by millions of years. Yet, if Geology cannot foretell future facts, it enabled Sir Roderick Murchison to foretell the discovery of Australian gold."<sup>2</sup>

It would not be easy to construct a more glaring fallacy than this, or to supply a plainer proof of logical weakness. Sir Roderick Murchison foretold, in the terms of the case, *not a geological but a historical event*.<sup>3</sup> The truth is, Geology is essentially a retrospective and explanatory science—a fact which gives cause for modifying the formulas of both Buckle and Hume as to the purpose and utility of all science—though it can and does predict certain gradual changes in the earth's surface and in local climate with a measure of precision as to periods of time. What it cannot yet predict are the cataclysms which set up new volcanoes, or submerge islands ; because our knowledge of the forces under the earth's crust, and their obstacles, is still very vague. But the fact that Geology is thus imperfect, and is "not a century old," is not held to deprive it of the title of a science.<sup>4</sup> And it is hard to see how the youth of Geology tells as an argument in favour of Mr Froude's denial of the possibility of a science of history.

When it is thus recognised that the power of prediction, which we admit to characterise a science proper, is a limited and conditional power, varying in scope and pre-

<sup>1</sup> The reference may be to E. S. Dallas, *The Gay Science*, 1866, i. 61.

<sup>2</sup> *Short Studies*, p. 18.

<sup>3</sup> As a matter of fact, gold had been found in Australia before Murchison spoke. See Del Mar's *History of the Precious Metals*, 1880, p. 173.

<sup>4</sup> Buckle in one of his letters (*Life*, i. 92) declares that "Geology, without Animal Physiology, Comparative Anatomy, and Botany, has no scientific existence ; and every good work on geology presupposes a knowledge of those subjects." This clashes with his own statement in his book (iii. 391), that "in England, scientific geology owes its existence to William Smith, . . . who . . . occupied himself between the years 1790 and 1815 in a laborious examination of different strata." It is in an earlier chapter (ii. 369) that he pronounces Cuvier "unquestionably the founder of geology as a science," and endorses the view that "without paleontology there would be, properly speaking, no geology." But the stage at which we accept Geology as "a science" need not be discussed when it is admitted that it has attained that position.

cision according to the nature of the science, it becomes clear that there may be a science of history which transcends Mr Froude's very facile objections. What Buckle claimed for his science was that it could generalise past social processes, and so give a *conditional* knowledge of the future. He did not say it would enable us to predict individual or isolated facts, or give precise dates for future developments. His argument is that, given certain conditions, certain general results will follow. That disturbing conditions may arise is obvious: they arise equally in geology, in chemistry, in medicine. The physician can broadly and scientifically say that certain conditions tend to shorten life: and he may often predict accurately the time of the death of a patient from a given malady, under normal or under bad conditions; but he will sometimes miscalculate, and will seldom feel confident as to all the details. So with the sociologist. He may reasonably make such predictions as these:—

That, provided there be no great foreign war or domestic commotion, the English House of Lords will be abolished within half a century; that members of Parliament will be salaried within a quarter of a century; and that the monarchy will be abolished within one or two centuries—that is, unless the nation begins to retrogress greatly within that time by reason of the exhaustion of its coal supply.

That if the habit of saving continues to flourish in France and England as now, in excess of the possibilities of safe investment, there will be many more financial swindles and scandals on a large scale.

That the strifes between capital and labour in the United States will go from bad to worse, unless far-reaching measures of social reconstruction are resorted to.

That the infantile death-rate among the poor in England will ten years hence be much heavier than among the rich, as it is at present.

That the British Islands will within a few generations be under a federal constitution, unless foreign or civil war retards their political development.

That the Socialist movement in Germany will continue to grow in the immediate future unless the Emperor resorts to a war policy.

Here are a number of predictions, most of them conditional, but conditional in varying degrees. And while only the actual fulfilment of them can make an end of doubt as to their accuracy, most men will give their assent to some of them with little hesitation. Few men will hesitate to "lay their account" by the continuance for a good many years of poverty and a high death-rate among the poor, for instance. As to the other forecasts, it may here suffice to remind the reader of political predictions actually made and fulfilled in the past. (1.) The severance of the American colonies from the mother-country was repeatedly predicted.<sup>1</sup> (2.) The French Revolution was repeatedly predicted.<sup>2</sup> (3.) Civil convulsion in the United States was predicted by many writers. It is needless here to go into the old logical issues of "probability" and the proper basis of belief; since in all cases of prediction alike, doubt is possible up to the moment of fulfilment, though in such cases as that of an eclipse, where the absolute past regularity of nature is so well established, no one in practice thinks of harbour-

<sup>1</sup> For instance, in 1703, by Du Bos in *Les Intérêts de l'Angleterre mal entendus dans la guerre présente* (cited by Voltaire, *Catalogue des Ecrivains in Siècle de Louis XIV.*); by Argenson (cited by Lecky, *Hist. of England in 18th cent.*); by Choiseul and Vergennes on the French surrender in Canada (cited by Bancroft, *Hist. of U.S.*, Centennial ed., iii. 305). Buckle (ii. 321, *note*) gives it as a proof of the political sagacity of Turgot that "in 1750 he distinctly foretold the freedom of the American colonies," citing *Œuvres de Turgot*, ii. 66 (ed. 1811) and *Mémoires sur Turgot*, i. 139. It is somewhat of an oversight to say after this, as he does (p. 373, *note*), that "neither Montesquieu nor Turgot appears to have believed in the possibility of generalising the past so as to predict the future." For Montesquieu as well as Turgot foretold the secession of the English colonies: "Je crois que si quelque nation est abandonnée de ses colonies, cela commencera par la nation anglaise." *Notes sur l'Angleterre*, in *Pensées Diverses*.

<sup>2</sup> See Rocquain, *L'Esprit Révolutionnaire avant la Révolution*, 1878, pp. 73, 114, 145, 147, 162, &c. Cp. Rousseau, *Confessions*, L. xi. (*Œuvres*, ed. 1817, vol. xiv., pp. 474-475), for a detailed statement of reasons for expecting a "break-up."

ing doubt on the score that, say, our system may at some point collide with another. The upshot is that in history, as in commerce and in medicine, the general course of human affairs may be scientifically forecasted; and reasoned predictions of general events have frequently been fulfilled. It is true that many predictions have proved to be false. Buckle himself is seen to have been over-sanguine about the era of European peace that was to follow the International Exhibition.<sup>1</sup> He ought to have remembered that a war is emphatically one of the class of events that may turn on the volitions of a few persons. We may even say further that his optimism led him astray on the general question of industrial welfare. But errors of this kind are incident to every science in its early stages; analogous errors occur frequently in medicine, in meteorology, even in chemical analysis. If we are to say that that only is a "science" in whose current teaching there are no errors, the discussion collapses at once. The other day, Professors Rayleigh and Ramsay, going back to a statement of Cavendish, ignored or overlooked ever since by the whole body of physicists, affirmed the presence of a "new element" in atmospheric air, and seemed to prove their case; and the long received theory of dew has been partly called in question by Mr Aitken. The essence of a science is a certain logical regularity of method, were it only in classification: in the words of Hume, "it becomes no inconsiderable part of science, barely to know the different operations of the mind, to separate them from each other, to class them under their proper heads."<sup>2</sup>

If this were not so, several branches of knowledge which are without challenge classed as scientific would have to lose their rank. Philology, for instance, is not only in the main a non-predictive science—here again we are led to revise the formulas of Hume and Buckle as well as Mr Froude's—but it is subject to constant modification in

<sup>1</sup> See i. 190; and compare the *Life*, i. 77-78.

<sup>2</sup> *Inquiry* cited, Sect. i.



its conclusions; this by reason of the complexity of the data and, by consequence, of the reasoning which shall interpret them. But inasmuch as philology has methodically classed great masses of detail, and traced through them certain demonstrable laws of sequence, it ranks as a science even with theologians.

And the same reasoning applies to errors of interpretation, of what we have called "retrodiction." The proper analogue to sociology<sup>1</sup> here is not astronomy but zoology or biology—the field of the study of the origin, nature, and variation of plant and animal species. This, the most widely cultivated of all fields of scientific study, save that of medicine, clearly does not admit of prediction save to a very limited extent;<sup>2</sup> and in respect of its accounts of origins and developments, it is quite incapable of such retrodiction as Mr Froude demands of the science of history. It can only offer broad generalisations and hypotheses as to either origins or variations; and some of its theories have long been under vigorous discussion. The doctrine of Weismann is eminently hypothetical, but even those of us who think it in great part fallacious do not, as a rule, call it unscientific. So with Darwin's theory of sexual selection, which seems to be thoroughly unsound: it was yet scientific because orderly in its method, as was Mr Wallace's no less unsound counter-theory.<sup>3</sup> The claim of Darwinian biology to rank as a science rests on the broad ground of the consistent interpretation of innumerable facts, the logical massing of multitudes of phenomena in causal series, the verification of hypotheses by later discovered evidence, and the

<sup>1</sup> Buckle did not use this term, and it has been much objected to on the score of its hybrid etymology. But many words must be allowed to "hang as they grow." It seems vain to try to naturalise "politology"; and after all "sociology" is not more illegitimate in one way than "philology" is in another. The right word for that would clearly be "logology," or "glossology."

<sup>2</sup> I of course exclude such prediction as the forecast that of a certain number of seeds, a certain proportion will fructify, or that certain conditions will promote certain forms of life. Nobody disputes that predictions of this class can be made in human affairs.

<sup>3</sup> See Geddes and Thomson's *Evolution of Sex*, pp. 8-30.

leading up to the discovery of fresh evidence by sound hypotheses. And if this claim holds good in the case of evolutionary biology, it holds equally good in the case of Buckle's science of history. His theories can be verified by cases to which he did not apply it. The thesis of the impotence of moral maxims to invigorate or moralise a morbid civilisation can be proved in the case of Byzantium; the theses of the all-importance of knowledge and the dangerousness of the protective spirit can be proved from the same field; the thesis of the tendency of a cheap food supply to promote poverty can be proved afresh from the cases of China and Ireland. Conversely his principles prepare us to find the free and progressive civilisations rising as secondary processes in regions where Nature is less spontaneously bountiful; and to see that the readily fed peoples and cheaply multiplying peoples can never be raised to a much higher level of culture save by way of assimilating the knowledge and the ideas which would lead them to restrain deliberately their rate of increase. Nay, the same principle leads us to the perception, not that Free Trade, as such, should be resisted (this was the anti-democratic and therefore impracticable solution of Malthus), but that mere Free Trade and cheapened food without restraint of population and industrial regulation must in the end involve larger areas of distress than the old: a conclusion which, to some extent, disallows Buckle's own Liberal optimism in general<sup>1</sup> and his out-and-out opposition to the Protective spirit in particular. As he is thus open to correction in respect of the too sweeping character of some of his theses, so his theses on the other hand need to be supplemented. He has not formulated all the forces which make for and against progress in civilisation; he expressly said again and again, as we have seen, that he only claimed to set forth a few of the main laws of progress, by way of introduction to his planned study of the history of civilisation in England. But neither his

<sup>1</sup> In so far, that is, as he did not bring his Malthusianism into constant relation with his politics.

errors of excess nor his errors of defect put him or his work outside the category of science and the scientific, any more than do the similar errors of Kepler, or Newton, or Cuvier, or Darwin, or Haeckel. His errors are the errors of a great pioneer, errors of energy and of the enthusiasm of ideas, and like all errors incident to a right method they involve, in the process of correction, deeper and clearer knowledge.

There is little need to reason further in reply to Mr Froude. His main argument being nugatory, the minor ones collapse with it. They are, briefly :

1. That historical facts come to us through fallible channels—those of human testimony.
2. That with the same facts different philosophers have built up absolutely different philosophies of history.
3. That men's motives are mixed and fluctuating. Sometimes they act ill and selfishly, sometimes well and unselfishly. Therefore you can never generalise.
4. That as "each new generation varies from the last, because it inhales as its spiritual atmosphere the accumulated experience and knowledge of the whole past of the world," we can never forecast. "The temper of each new generation is a continual surprise."

Each of these propositions falls before the rebuttals already made. (1.) The general facts of history are not harder to extricate from confused or inaccurate or vague or imperfect testimony than the facts of geology and palæontology. It is part of the business of the science to sift testimony and secure general truths. (2.) The fact that different men have wrought out irreconcilably different systems of historic interpretation is on all fours with the facts of the development of other sciences. Ptolemy and Copernicus dealt with the same phenomena ; the Plutonists and the Neptunists with the same geological problem. The way to truth in science is always through error. And that man does most for science, and stands best in its record, who supplies most of valid doctrine and least of

fallacy. What is claimed for Buckle is that in the main, after thirty years, his reasoning and his principles hold good, while nine-tenths of the opposition to him proves to be vain. (3, 4.) It is a monstrous exaggeration, as regards the majority of mankind, to say that each generation lives in the atmosphere of the accumulated knowledge of the past. But insofar as such progression, or, on the contrary, retrogression, takes place, it is the very business of the sociologist, in the terms of the proposition in hand, to trace the causes, the factors; just as it is his business to trace and explain the varying play of selfish and unselfish motives; and to say that this cannot be done is simply to beg the question. Thus Mr Froude's argument is, that we cannot explain causally the sequent development of societies, or the conduct of men in the mass, because these are things we cannot do. *Solvuntur tabulae.*

Having come to this, Mr Froude, as was his wont, relapses fatally into that rhetoric which, as he himself says of other people's, "is only misleading." And in the process he overturns his whole process of argument. After arguing that there can be no forecasting, that "the temper of each new generation is a continual surprise," he be-thinks him that he must show some good to arise from the study of History, his own profession. So:

"First, it is a voice sounding across the centuries the laws of right and wrong. Opinions alter, manners change, creeds rise and fall, but the moral law is written on the tablets of eternity. For every false word or unrighteous deed, for cruelty and oppression, for lust or vanity, *the price has to be paid at last*: not always by the chief offenders, but by some one. . . . Injustice and falsehood may be long-lived, but *doomsday comes at last to them in French revolutions and other terrible ways.*"<sup>1</sup>

And this is to support the argument that there can be no historical prediction! It is instructive to reflect that this imbecile self-contradiction can pass with thousands of people as high theistic wisdom, while Buckle is derided as a vendor of fallacies. Immediately after the rant cited, we have this:—

<sup>1</sup> P. 28.

"That is one lesson of History. Another is, that we should draw no horoscopes ; that we should expect little, for *what we expect will not come to pass.*"

That is to say, the second lesson is that the first lesson is false. Here again, though he has no glimpse of the utter absurdity at which he has arrived, Mr Froude pauses to ask, "Can the long records of humanity . . . teach us no more than this?" and he tries to draw some more "lessons." The result is a slipshod dissertation on Shakspeare, who "represents *real* life" with such "supreme truth," inasmuch as he "leaves the mystery of life as he finds it ; and in his most tremendous positions he is addressing rather the intellectual emotions than the understanding—*knowing* well that the understanding in such things is at fault, and the sage is *ignorant* as the child." That is, we *know* otherwise than by the understanding that Shakspeare "represents real life" — a matter in which the sage is as ignorant as the child. "An inferior artist," on the contrary, "composes what are called *moral tales*, which may edify the conscience, but only mislead the intellect"—unlike the moral tale into which Mr Froude has himself even now been turning history. Shakspeare on the contrary draws no moral lesson whatever from life. And this is a support to Mr Froude's proposition that all that history yields is just a moral lesson !

"Or again, look at Homer," who is so vivid, so pictorial. "We have there no lessons save in the emotions which rise in us as we read. Homer has no philosophy." So we ought not to have any ; and history should be read as we read Homer. Here endeth the fourth lesson.

But still we must not suppose that poetry is greater than truth. "*Even literal facts, exactly as they were*, a great poet will prefer whenever he can get them. Shakspeare in the historical plays is studious, wherever possible, to give the very words which he finds to have been used ; and *it shows how wisely he was guided in this*, that these magnificent speeches of Wolsey are taken exactly, with no more change than the metre makes necessary, from Cavendish's

Life."<sup>1</sup> So that after all, Shakspeare handled history very much as Mr Froude does ; and if the Wolsey speeches were written by Fletcher, "why then the more Shakspeare he."

Therefore, "if Homer and Shakspeare are what they are, from the absence of everything didactic about them, may we not thus learn what history should be, and in what sense it should aspire to teach?"<sup>2</sup> "Marlborough read Shakspeare for English history, and read nothing else."<sup>3</sup> And if Marlborough could thus rest in Shakspeare, why may not even the Duke of Cambridge to-day be satisfied with Mr Froude? Q. E. D. If there is any other "lesson," it has eluded the present inquirer. "For the rest," says Mr Froude, leading up to a peroration which closes with a quantity of Wordsworth, "and for those large questions which I touched in connection with Mr Buckle, we live in times of disintegration, and none can tell what will be after us." Then comes the crescendo.

It would be uncandid to assume that this grotesque exhibition of critical incompetence is typical of the academic opposition to the historical philosophy of Buckle. We have dealt with a number of critics who show much more capacity than Mr Froude for the conduct of an argument : indeed, we have dealt with none who shows less. The school of Mr Froude, or at least the writing of Mr Froude, represents the low water mark of historical judgment in this generation. The late Mr Freeman, with but little more of philosophical insight, and with nearly as much of fatal fluency, was not cursed with the psychology of a chameleon ; so that at worst he does but fatigue us with voluble platitude,<sup>4</sup> where Mr Froude leaves us hopelessly struggling to distinguish between his history and his hysteria. On the point of relative erudition, it would be cruel to speak. But Mr Froude, a fashionable preacher gone wrong, really represents the common run of

<sup>1</sup> P. 33.

<sup>2</sup> P. 34.

<sup>3</sup> P. 33.

<sup>4</sup> This, however, will not hold good of some of the views expressed in his *Life and Letters*. See an article, "Freeman on Christianity," in *Free Review*, July 1895.

what passes for opinion on such matters as he has sought to discuss in the lecture under notice ; and the malicious expert criticism with which Mr Freeman pursued his stumbling steps did not stand for any judicial resentment of his execrable confusion of thought. Mr Freeman, positively speaking, was hardly any nearer a philosophy of history than Froude. It is thus not unfitting to take Froude as a typical anti-scientific historiographer ; and it is as such that he has been above dealt with. It is important, when we are considering the defects of the work of Buckle, to realise what mere sonorous inanity serves in many quarters to supersede him.

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It is unnecessary, after the foregoing discussion, to deal at any length with the objections brought against Buckle's conception of a science of history by Professor C. K. Adams of Cornell University,<sup>1</sup> who in part repeats the objections of Mr Froude, and in particular lays stress on Buckle's having demonstrated that individuals count for a great deal in history, after he had laid it down that individual wills counterbalance one another. I have already admitted that there are inconsistencies in Buckle's treatment of the subject ; but it has appeared, I think, that these inconsistencies are soluble, and do not at all affect the central doctrine that history is reducible to law. As it is, Professor Adams somewhat misses the point of Buckle's argument as to Spain and Scotland. For the rest, he partly confutes himself in seeking to rebut Buckle, when he argues, first, that individuals and accidents count for more than any observable general law, and secondly, that the frequent lack of good evidence prevents the accurate establishment of the latter. If that be so, obviously it must equally exclude belief in the former. On the whole, Mr Adams' conclusion that "we are left substantially where we were before Comte and Buckle began their work" may be dismissed as an extravagance.

<sup>1</sup> *Manual of Historical Literature*, 3rd ed., pp. 5-7.

## CHAPTER XI.

### BUCKLE'S REAL ERRORS.

#### § I.

IN the foregoing answers to criticisms, among many vindications of Buckle's positions, there have been made a number of admissions of errors on his part, errors sometimes of statement, sometimes of argument, sometimes of expression. If a position is worth defending at all, there should be no hesitation in making such admissions in regard to it, for it only weakens the defence as a whole to make it cover weak as well as strong places. Coleridge avowed <sup>1</sup> that he made it a rule never to admit the blemishes of a writer in discussion with those who were incapable of appreciating his beauties; but that plausible canon is met by the objection that the refusal to acknowledge the blemish may be the very means of confirming the opponent in his prejudice; while if one is sure that he cannot in any case appreciate the beauties, there is no sense in discussing with him at all. So the mere utilitarian must needs be a little more candid than the transcendentalist.

Nor has the list of Buckle's errors been exhausted in the foregoing discussions. I have sometimes thought that a much more effective attack might be made on him than any of those hereinbefore discussed, by a critic who took pains alike to understand his arguments and to check his statements of fact, and who cared only to dwell on errors. I have found in his pages a number of faults which none of his antagonists seem to have noticed; and I propose to set forth the more important of these, just because I am satisfied that their correction leaves the main values of his book only the more certain.

<sup>1</sup> *Letters, &c., of Coleridge*, ed. by Allsop, 3d. ed., p. 3.



First, let us group the main corrections already suggested.

1. The formula of the unprogressiveness of the "moral element, while in one sense quite true, and while practically true as against the great delusion that all progress is a matter of moral initiative, requires to be modified in terms of the facts of ethical psychology.<sup>1</sup>
2. Some of the language used as to the irresistibility of natural law in the matter of averages of actions is inappropriate and misleading.<sup>2</sup>
3. The formulas as to the non-influence of individuals in human affairs are inexact, and need modification.<sup>3</sup> Framed with an eye to the mere moral bias of individuals, they have the unintended effect of ignoring the influence of individuals in extending knowledge, which is the progressive force affirmed in the central proposition, and of contradicting Buckle's own assertion that kings and rulers can do great harm.
4. His treatment of Judaism and Christianity, though sufficiently critical to infuriate religionists, is not thorough and consistent in terms of his own principles.<sup>4</sup>
5. He sets up a gratuitous paradox in identifying the mere demotic spirit in the case of Scotland with "liberality," and treats the Celts unscientifically.<sup>5</sup>

## § 2.

It has been further suggested (6) that Buckle's account of the Protective spirit, while true and valuable as pointing to the immense evils which that spirit has worked and may conceivably work again, is unduly absolute;<sup>6</sup> and it may be well here to give reasons for that view. It may be best brought out by taking Buckle's account of the Protective spirit in the case of France and Louis XIV. He there

<sup>1</sup> See above, pp. 269-285.

<sup>2</sup> See pp. 285-291.

<sup>3</sup> See pp. 121-136.

<sup>4</sup> See pp. 11, 145, 188.

<sup>5</sup> Pp. 159, 253.

<sup>6</sup> See pp. 19, 134, 150, 185.

gives a remarkable demonstration of the decline of intellectual capacity in France in the latter part of the reign of Louis, as measured by the mental stature of the leading writers at his accession and at his death. Buckle makes the strong statement that "Louis XIV survived the entire intellect of the French nation, except that small part of it which grew up in opposition to his principles, and afterwards shook the throne of his successor."<sup>1</sup> I cannot think that he realised the full implications of this assertion, its double bearing on his view of the Protective spirit, and its relation to his preceding account of the king's policy. His general doctrine in the matter is that

"If in the long course and compass of history there is one thing more clear than another, it is that wherever a government undertakes to protect intellectual pursuits, it will almost always protect them in the wrong place and reward the wrong men. Nor is it surprising that this should be the case. What can kings and ministers know about those universal branches of knowledge, to cultivate which with success is often the business of an entire life?"<sup>2</sup> "Under such a system, the natural results are, first, the impoverishment and servility of genius; then the decay of knowledge, then the decline of the country."<sup>3</sup>

And his particular doctrine as regards the special case is that

"the national intellect, stunted by the protection of the court, was so diverted from the noblest branches of knowledge, that in none of them did it produce anything worthy of being recorded. As a natural consequence, the minds of men, driven from the higher departments, took refuge in the lower, and concentrated themselves upon those inferior subjects where the discovery of truth is not the main object, but where beauty of form and expression are the things chiefly pursued. Thus, the first consequence of the patronage of Louis XIV. was to diminish the field for genius, and to sacrifice science to art. The second consequence was that, even in art itself, there was soon seen a marked decay. *For a time, the stimulus produced its effect; but [it] was followed by that collapse which is its natural result.*"<sup>4</sup>

Now, both the particular and the general proposition have the characteristics of evidence led to support a pre-supposition, inasmuch as they leave a number of factors

<sup>1</sup> II. 210.<sup>2</sup> II. 203.<sup>3</sup> P. 204.<sup>4</sup> P. 205.

out of account and a number of phenomena unexplained. The presupposition I take to have been an extension of the Smithian economics. Smith argued,<sup>1</sup> not only that the universities of Europe had been unfavourable to the advancement of truth, but that "the endowments of schools and colleges have necessarily diminished, more or less, the necessity of application in the teachers." Buckle in effect argues that kings and governments alike not only encourage the wrong men but sterilise them by encouraging them. But to make good such a generalisation, it is clear, the case of one king and one government is quite insufficient. It would be necessary to show (*a*) that there were no important exceptions; (*b*) that the sciences and arts are always found to flourish best when not officially encouraged; and (*c*) that in the case in hand the admittedly flourishing character of the French intellect at the *beginning* of the reign of Louis XIV. had not resulted from the protective policy of his predecessors; and finally, (*d*) it would be necessary to explain how the intellect of France came to dwindle, eminent men to be scarce, because the king and his ministers patronised incompetence. Buckle really shows none of these things.

It does not seem to have occurred to him that if genius actually disappeared there must have been, in terms of his own argument, some other reason for it than the encouragement of inferiority. Why should such encouragement kill out genius, if genius needs no encouragement in order to multiply and prosper? It is not shown that the king specially persecuted or repressed genius. If then great writers and great artists abounded at his accession, without having been specially elicited by protection, why did they not continue to appear alongside of the non-entities he patronised in the latter part of his reign? The moment the question is put, it becomes evident that there were causes at work which Buckle has improperly kept out of the explanation. Either genius needs protection in order to develop and fructify, or the decline of

<sup>1</sup> *Wealth of Nations*, B. v., ch. i. art. 2.

genius in France at the end of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth century was brought about by other causes than the mere practice or the mere misdirection of court patronage of literature and art. And at once the reflection forces itself that the main cause was precisely the forcing of the main energy of the nation into the channels of war by the king's foreign policy. There need be no question as to the actual decline. It is admitted by Lacretelle, by Barante, by Sismondi, by Voltaire, and by many others, as Buckle notes;<sup>1</sup> and it is the more intelligible because, as Buckle also notes, it was coincident with the deepest national exhaustion that France has ever undergone, the exhaustion which had reached its worst during the victories of Marlborough. France as a whole was at the lowest pitch of poverty and suffering while she was desperately maintaining great armies and an untaxed aristocracy. To say that in this state of things the dearth of great literature and art was due to the royal system of Protection is to ignore the main factor in the case. It was the result of the royal policy of military aggression. All that Buckle says of the "corruption, servility, and loss of power" in the period is perfectly true: what is wrong is his diagnosis of the proximate causes.

A survey of the case without prejudice will serve, not only to reverse Buckle's special explanation, but to shake his whole doctrine as to the necessary harmfulness of a protective policy in science, literature, and art,—in the sense, that is, of a policy of encouraging those who work in those fields. We must distinguish between evocative and repressive protection. Repressive protection, as in the case of the punishment or ostracism of innovating and heretical teachers, deserves all that can be said against it: it is always pernicious. But evocative protection, the encouraging of given studies or pursuits by State rewards, is not at all in the same category. Like every other human activity, it may be

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 208, 210, *notes*.

conducted wisely or unwisely; but there is no more reason to take a pessimistic view of its possibilities than there is in the case of any science, or any well-intentioned pursuit whatever. To begin with, we have Buckle's own avowal that in Spain in the last century Charles III. carried on an admirable system of literary, scientific, artistic, and administrative protection. To this he does not allude in his chapter on the Protective Spirit under Louis XIV.: he points instead to the ages of Augustus and Leo X., which were followed by periods of great decline. Now, it is easy to show that in each of these cases it was not the mere protection of the ruler that caused the subsequent decline. To say as Buckle does<sup>1</sup> that "in each instance *the national spirit sank under that pernicious alliance between government and literature,*" is to give a very weak explanation indeed. There would obviously have been intellectual decline after Augustus whether he patronised literary talent or not, in respect of the whole tendency of the political organism; and similarly with Leo X. On the other hand, it is conceivable that if Augustus had not encouraged literature, much less would have been produced; and that if Tiberius and his successors had encouraged it, the decline would have been much less sudden and grievous. The case of Leo X., whose pontificate was followed by the Reformation, ruinous to the Papal finances, and by a series of destructive wars of religion, is quite an illicit analogy. It is not an illustration of the thesis at all, for the great artistic efflorescence before Leo X. was a product of protection also. In the case of Charles III. of Spain, it is true, Buckle argues very justly that when the wise King died things relapsed to their former condition because the mass of the people had not risen to the level of his policy. But on Buckle's own showing this must have been due to the insufficiency of the time devoted to progressive methods, for part of Charles's policy was to diffuse knowledge; and, as Buckle himself asks,<sup>2</sup> "what is it but the progress and diffusion

<sup>1</sup> P. 205.

<sup>2</sup> II. 202.

of knowledge which has given us our arts, our sciences, our manufactures, our laws, our opinions, our luxuries, our civilisation?" It would follow that if Charles III. had been succeeded in Spain by sovereigns of his own way of thinking, instead of by dullards, the progress of Spain might have gone on continuously till her general advancement was secured.

Here, of course, we come to the crucial question. What is wrong is not the principle of evocative protection, but (a) the frequent misdirection of it by kings; from which we are led to the corollary (b) that monarchic government is in the main very unfavourable to the right directing of it. "After a careful study of the history of literature," says Buckle,<sup>1</sup> "I think myself authorised to say, that for one instance in which a sovereign has recompensed a man who is before his age, there are at least twenty instances of his recompensing one who is behind his age." Quite so: it is one more argument against monarchy.<sup>2</sup> The monarchic system gives no security for average wisdom in the encouragement of any activity whatever. But Buckle has included in his negation all methods of government as well as the monarchic: he attacks the principle of evocative protection in itself. And all the while he has given the most direct rebuttal to his own proposition in the very case in hand. In beginning his account of the pernicious effect of Louis's protection on the intellectual life of France, he writes:—

"The first circumstance is that *the immense impulse which, during the administration of Richelieu and Mazarin, had been given to the highest branches of knowledge, was suddenly stopped.*"

What then was this "immense impulse" but a process of evocative protection by two prime ministers in succession? Buckle, it is true, says of Richelieu<sup>3</sup> that he

<sup>1</sup> II. 184.

<sup>2</sup> And yet there are a good many cases the other way in England. Charles II. "recompensed" Hobbes, and George III. encouraged Handel in the teeth of public indifference.

<sup>3</sup> II. 28.

succeeded as he did because "his large and comprehensive views harmonized with" the sceptical tendency of his age. But this applies to his political liberalism and secularism; and it is a matter of fact that both Richelieu and Mazarin protected and encouraged literature, science, and art.<sup>1</sup> This decisive circumstance Buckle passes lightly over; and if he had not done so his argument would disrupt at the first glance. Either the practice of protection by Richelieu and Mazarin helped the studies protected, or it hindered them. Buckle's thesis is that protection always injures. But he has expressly testified that an "immense impetus" was given to the said studies under these statesmen, and that France had an abundance of distinguished men when Louis XIV. came to the throne. Then protection is not necessarily pernicious. Then it is not proved that in the reign of Louis it was his system of patronage that paralysed literature and art. On the contrary, inasmuch as Richelieu and Mazarin encouraged science, and Louis did not, it is presumable that the prosperity of science under them was in part due to their encouragement, and its stagnation under him to his withdrawal of support. How, on the other view, could he "sacrifice" science to art? If he neglected science, he was doing exactly what Buckle declares to be the best thing that could be done for science.<sup>2</sup>

Yet again, if it be admitted that Louis' first encourage-

<sup>1</sup> Had not Buckle been committed by his thesis to making out that French literature and science were in a very flourishing state *before* Louis XIV. began to rule, he might have asked whether Richelieu's patronage really did so greatly stimulate them. Mr Kitchin (who stiffly adheres to the Smithian and Bucklean view that all protection is bad, yet is confused by the phenomena) points out how Richelieu persecuted Corneille and exalted Malherbe and other inferior men (*History of France*, iii. 82). It is certainly true that much must be allowed for the fructifying effect of the contact of Spanish literature, which is specially apparent in Corneille.

<sup>2</sup> I am here assuming for the argument's sake that Buckle was right in saying that Louis XIV. did relatively little to promote science. But, as a matter of fact, it was in his reign (1666) that Colbert founded the Academy of Sciences, whereas the Academy founded by Richelieu had been almost wholly devoted to *belles lettres* (see the point discussed in the *Free Review*, Feb. 1895, p. 466, *note*. And see below, pp. 336-337).

ment of art served to promote it, it is no adequate explanation to say that the stimulus was necessarily followed by collapse. Why should it at first work well? A stimulant in the case of the physical man tends to be followed by collapse because it has forced some organ or organs into excessive activity, which cannot be continued, and which leaves the man *pro tanto* weakened; but it is not pretended that Louis caused art to be cultivated in excess of the capacity of the artists or the nation. On the contrary, Buckle implies that but for his patronage art would have been carried much further. The argument is in chaos.

To reach a sound conclusion, we must follow another path. We must recognise, to begin with, that the development of the sceptical spirit in France in the first part of the seventeenth century, and its development in England in the second part, were alike to be traced in great measure to the psychic reaction following on religious wars. Scepticism there had indeed been before: the anti-Aristotelian movement was older than Bacon; but the specific recoil from all religious zealotry, and from the very temper of theology, was in France the sequel of the age-long wars of Catholics and Protestants (1559-1598), and in England the sequel of the Civil War and the Commonwealth. It has already been suggested<sup>1</sup> that this is an explanation which requires to be combined with Buckle's doctrine of the influence of the sceptical spirit: we must state the causal conditions in which the sceptical spirit rises. It may be as a result of comparison and clash of cultures, of knowledges, of philosophies: it may be as a result of wearying and disillusioning and ruinous wars of sects. And such reactions may have very various tendencies. One effect of the memory of the Civil Wars even in England, though there the motive to war had been much more vital than in France,<sup>2</sup> was to make later generations very loth to resort

<sup>1</sup> Above, pp. 282-283.

<sup>2</sup> That is to say, the English Civil War arose out of the deep-seated antipathies of sects, and in part out of the developing democratic instinct. This



to arms, against the ruling powers: and similarly the memory of the war of the Fronde counted for a great deal not only in the submission of the French nation to Louis XIV. but in the disregard of political questions by the men of letters in the next generation, which Buckle ascribes<sup>1</sup> wholly to the influence of the spirit of protection. It will perhaps be found accurate to say that when a great impression has been made by a great event or train of events on the feelings of a generation, a long time must elapse before this impression can so wear out as to permit of men's reasoning without prejudice on questions which recal such events. It was not only the memory of the senseless war of the Fronde, but also the confirmation of the impression it left by the similar impression arising from the spectacle of the Civil War in England, that made Frenchmen, for wellnigh a century, exhibit that spirit of royalist subjection on which Buckle bestows so many English epithets, which might just as well have been developed among Englishmen save for the two happy accidents of the diversion of the English throne, first to Dutch William and again to German George.

In the period of Richelieu, all that had happened was the recoil from theological thought and feeling; and then it was that, the minister helping, there began such a notable development of original capacity in the nation. As Buckle reminds us, Descartes, Pascal, Gassendi, Pecquet, Fermat, and Rey, in science, had done their work before the time

last is well shown by Buckle. I am told that Professor Beesley, in a lecture on "Sir Harry Vane," some years ago, disparaged Buckle's statement as to the popular character of the movement against Charles I., contending that it was conducted mainly by the governing class on each side. Every historic criticism by Professor Beesley is worth attending to; and in so far as Buckle's account of matters may have obscured the fact that at the outset the Civil War was managed by the landed class on both sides, the criticism referred to may be of importance. But any one who reads the whole of Buckle's exposition of the subject will see that he was drawing a very true and a very important distinction between the English Rebellion and the Fronde, and that in the former case a democratic element entered and expanded in a remarkable degree.

<sup>1</sup> II. 251.

of Louis XIV. ; Poussin, Claude Lorraine, and Le Brun had done their best work in art ; Corneille was of Richelieu's day ; the work of Molière and Racine and Lafontaine belonged to the first years of Louis's reign ; La Rochefoucauld published his *Maximes* in 1665 ; Malebranche his *Inquiry respecting Truth* in 1674 ; and La Bruyère his *Caractères* in 1687. It was in the interval between Richelieu and the actual rule of Louis XIV., that is, between 1642 and 1661, that the Fronde (1648-1653) absorbed so much of the nation's recovered energy ; and when Louis assumed power on the death of Mazarin in 1661 he had a people peculiarly disposed to submission, tired of civil strife, and further disposed to conservatism in that it had already a gallery of great dead and of eminent contemporaries, who within fifty years had given France a new intellectual and artistic life. The mere magnetising or hypnotising influence of such a galaxy of great names is not sufficiently recognised by Buckle : he does not go into the problem of the spontaneous imitateness of mankind. Even had Louis XIV. made the wisest use of his power of protection, he could not well have found men able to eclipse or parallel Descartes, Pascal, Corneille, La Rochefoucauld, or later to succeed Racine, Molière, and Lafontaine. And it was certainly not his patronage that prevented such successors from arising or developing : for on that view we must decide either that his not patronising the able men left these unable to prosper—which is the direct negation of Buckle's thesis on protection—or that his patronage so affected its recipients as to turn them from great men into small, a proposition which Buckle does not venture to make, and which is obviously untenable.<sup>1</sup> But inasmuch

<sup>1</sup> It is nevertheless implied in the curiously contradictory passage in which Mr Kitchin (*History of France*, iii. 160-161) restates Buckle's doctrine. Mr Kitchin writes that "the same spirit of protection was directed towards letters also :—letters which, even more than commerce or manufactures, suffer from the baneful influences of patronage. In the previous period the greatest men in the literary annals of France had been in opposition, some even in voluntary banishment ; now, however, official help was provided ; and *we can see the effects of it in that gradual dying down of the fires of genius*, which

as Louis did actually embark his country on a career of insensate militarism, creating at once a new and immense army, building in time a hundred great fortresses, turning to war a strength of 400,000 men at a time, where Louis XIII. normally had only 80,000,<sup>1</sup> and creating a new navy of 230 ships manned by 60,000 men; going to war with Spain in 1666-1668 for Flanders and Franche-Comté; invading Holland in 1672 and carrying on the war with the coalition till 1678; capturing Strasburg in 1681; attacking Genoa and Algiers; revoking the Edict of Nantes in 1685, madly resuming religious persecution, and driving into foreign lands 800,000 of his most industrious subjects; breaking the heart of the great Colbert<sup>2</sup> by undoing his

goes on as the long reign continues." Yet Mr Kitchin immediately goes on to show that Louis and Colbert helped chiefly the dullards and neglected the geniuses. The pension list 1663 begins with the names of Mezerai, Godefroï, and Chapelain: "when we add that Molière and Racine come near the bottom of the list, and that Boileau does not appear at all, we get a fair idea of the value of this first systematic attempt at patronage." Then what becomes of the proposition in hand? It now appears that the trouble was *lack* of patronage of genius! Buckle and Mr Kitchin alike destroy their own case.

<sup>1</sup> Voltaire, *Siccle de Louis XIV.*, ch. ii. In 1635, however, Richelieu had organised an army of 132,000. Kitchin, *History of France*, iii. 61-62.

<sup>2</sup> It would follow on Buckle's line of argument here that Colbert's policy of protection was in itself bad; and here again he would have the precarious support of Mr Kitchin, who, sworn to the faith of *Laissez-faire*, perplexedly writes of Colbert that "it was his, quite against all more modern ideas of wise administration, to foster and subsidise production, literary or artistic, commercial or agricultural. France, which had never, even in Sully's days, seen so much care expended on her, smiled, and gratefully rewarded his labours with abundant fruitfulness. His care, however mistaken in principle, was far better than. . . the ruinous regulations and crushing taxation of former days" (*History of France*, iii. 157). In point of fact, Colbert's early success was extraordinary. But Mr Kitchin finds his Nemesis in the fact that "France has ever since leant on Government support instead of on the spontaneous energies of the people" (p. 159)—as if the government itself were not French energy. The English historian goes on to say (p. 160) that "the whole system was flagrantly opposed to all good economic principles, and *could never permanently increase the wealth of France.*" This is clearly the language of a criticism at the end of its arguments; for not only did Colbert's system, so far as it went, make "permanent" additions to French wealth (see same work, p. 161), but on the other hand the system of Free Trade would on Mr Kitchin's test be discredited by every commercial depression. It is unfortunate that our histories are still written without independent economic

best economic work; helping James II. in Ireland in 1689; beginning anew the European struggle and carrying it on till the peace of Ryswick in 1697; plunging again into the war of the Spanish succession in 1701 and carrying it on desperately till the peace of Utrecht in 1713—inasmuch as this was the main drift of French energy under Louis XIV., it is a plain fallacy to attribute the correlative and inevitable depression of literature, art, and science to the spirit of patronage in the first place and its misdirection in the second. The strength of the nation was simply drained in other ways. It could not multiply fivefold its military strength without stunting its other faculties. It had generals and ambassadors instead of thinkers and savans. Buckle does not mention the great captains who promptly rose in the places of Turenne and Condé and Duquesne—the renowned group of Luxembourg, Catinat, Vendôme, Tourville, d'Estrées, Château-Renaud, de Forbin, and Jean Bart—and certainly they weigh ill in the balances of history against the thinkers and artists who might have been bred from among the successive hosts sent by Louis to their death, or lost to civil science in the routine of camps and barracks. But we should ill appreciate one of the great lessons of history if we did not realise that human energy is thus transmutable, and that the course of a nation's civilisation is determined by its institutions as truly as by its antecedents. And that Buckle's one-sided treatment of the problem in hand is untrue to his own general method, is the more confidently to be claimed seeing that in another connection he quite rightly notes<sup>1</sup> that the dearth of English thinkers for a time after Locke and Newton occurred "not because the ability was wanting,

judgment. Mr Kitchin at least helps Buckle's credit, inasmuch as he has evidently not gone a step beyond him, save insofar as he confounds his own doctrine by declaring (p. 160) that Colbert "did little for agriculture, where sagacious laws and well-applied help *might have worked miracles*." This within four pages of the statement as to "abundant fruitfulness," and on the same page with the denunciation of protective measures in commerce, manufactures, and letters, as destructive of "permanent" prosperity.

<sup>1</sup> II. 374.

but because it was turned partly into practical pursuits, partly into political contests."

France, it is true, was not so destitute of notable living or recent names in literature and art at the end of the seventeenth century or at the Peace of Utrecht as Buckle has made out. He oddly overlooks the names of Basnage (1653-1723), Bayle (1647-1706), Beausobre (1659-1738), Du Bos (1670-1742), Calmet (1672-1757), Fénelon (1651-1715), Fleury (1640-1723), Fontenelle (1657?-1757), Hardouin (1646-1729), Huet (1630-1702), Montfaucon (1655-1741), Tillemont (1637-1698), Regnard (1656-1710), Renaudot, (1646-1720), Rollin (1661-1741), J. B. Rousseau (1669-1740), Ruinart (1657-1709), Le Sage (1677-1747), Saint-Evremond (1613-1703), Simon (1638-1712), and Astruc (1684-1766). All these were men of power and note, whether as scholars or writers. Even Rollin has counted for much; Tillemont and Montfaucon are among the giants of archæology and learning; Fénelon, Fontenelle, Regnard, and Le Sage are classics; Bayle's is a perdurable name; and Astruc and Simon are among the founders of scientific Biblical criticism. Nor must Hardouin and Ruinart be counted nonentities because their learning was so ill-managed: we must estimate in terms of energy and influence. And when we further remember that Montesquieu was twenty-six years old when Louis XIV. died, and Voltaire twenty-one, it is seen to be an extravagant thing to say that the king outlived the intellect of his nation. Even in the sciences, it is not clear that matters were so bad as Buckle represents. He forgets that it was in France in this age that there was established the *Journal des Savans*. He admits that Louis—he should have said Colbert—brought Cassini from Italy, Römer from Denmark, and Huyghens from Holland; but he points out that no native ability was shown in astronomy. That, however, does not prove that astronomy was less cultivated under protection than it would have been without it. It is a bad oversight, again, to pass entirely over the name of Denis Papin, one of the independent inventors of the steam engine, whose

period was 1650-1710, who was made a member of the English Royal Society, and who was famous here as late as the early days of Carlyle. Buckle is careful to point out that the micrometer was invented by Gascoigne before it was invented by Picard and Ruzout: but he has not a word on Papin's or De Caus' steam engines<sup>1</sup> in modification of his statement that "no great invention was made; and by the end of the reign of Louis XIV. scarcely anything had been done in machinery,"<sup>2</sup> though he later alludes to both men as having really made the invention.<sup>3</sup> Even the names of such mathematicians as De La Hire and Ozanam should not be overlooked in such a survey as Buckle undertook to make; and when he speaks of the defect of "mere practical ingenuity"<sup>4</sup> in France in the period of Louis XIV., he is misleading inasmuch as he ignores the great development of military engineering under Vauban. And in regard to the arts, we have to note that Colbert not only brought Poussin back from Rome, but established the Prix de Rome. That institution might well fail to develop great artists in the age of Louis XIV., but it will not be easy to prove that it has nothing to do with the long maintained superiority of France over other countries in sculpture.<sup>5</sup>

Yet again, it is an oversight to make nothing of the fact that in literature the age of Louis XIV. was largely one of criticism. Even though the famous critics of the time—Bossu, Bouhours, Du Bos, and Rapin—are no longer read, their work was not in vain, or for evil. Du Bos, as we have seen, greatly influenced Lessing; and Bouhours was

<sup>1</sup> This oversight at this particular stage of Buckle's work may be due to the fact that Papin's invention is steadfastly ignored by many English biographical dictionaries. Even one of such good standing as Mr Thompson Cooper's, ignores De Caus altogether, and suppresses all mention of Papin's engine, though the compilers must have seen it claimed for him in French dictionaries. See Arago's paper in the *Annuaire du bureau des longitudes* for 1830. On De Caus, who preceded Worcester, see Arago's paper in the same annual for 1830.

<sup>2</sup> II. 193.

<sup>3</sup> III. 403.

<sup>4</sup> II. 192.

<sup>5</sup> Even in the time of Charles II., however, the French traveller Monconys found the English statues in general inexpressibly bad. See his *Journal des Voyages*, 1666, *le Partie*, pp. 11, 13.

an excellent judge of the art of expression. That an intellectually innovating and exuberant age should be followed by one of imitation and criticism is a very intelligible sequence, even if in the second period the bulk of the nation's energy is not being spent in war. And the critical and measured period had its compensations in France, as in England. It is recorded by Voltaire that D'Aguesseau—who is highly praised by Buckle in another connection but overlooked in this, and whose period was 1668-1751—was the first man at the French bar who spoke at once with force and with purity.<sup>1</sup>

Finally, the very fact that the reign of Louis XIV. was followed by such an expansion of French intelligence is inexplicable on Buckle's view. He attributes it to the "reaction against the protective spirit;" but on his own showing the protective policy remained in full force. Louis XV. did not abandon it. It is Buckle's express complaint that it survives in France down to the present period; and he expressly records that at least nine out of every ten literary men, from the death of Louis XIV. to the Revolution, suffered from the government some grievous injury, while a majority of them were actually imprisoned.<sup>2</sup> And with this repressive protection on one hand there went evocative protection on the other. How then came the French intellect to turn as it did in that period towards the English, and draw thence the new inspiration which, as Buckle shows, made a new French epoch in the eighteenth century? The true answer is that the policy of peace which necessarily followed on the death of Louis XIV. liberated a mass of hitherto-misapplied energy. From 1715 to 1733 there was only the short Spanish war of 1719: the contracted realm needed much less military care; and even the war begun in 1733 was not a great struggle. Again, between the war of the Austrian Succession (1740-1748) and the Seven Years' War (1756-1763) there were eight years of peace; and again, from 1763 onwards, there was no war till

<sup>1</sup> *Siècle de Louis XIV. : Catalogue des Ecrivains.*

<sup>2</sup> II. 230.

after the Revolution. During all this time there went on the blind quarrels of the Molinists and the Jansenists, which had the effect of stimulating the spirit of scepticism even as the physical wars of Protestants and Catholics had done in the sixteenth century; and at the same time the strifes of the parliaments and the royal power stimulated a new political discussion. Here then are two main causal conditions which Buckle has left out of account, just as he has failed to meet the difficulty of the continuance of a protective policy alongside of the intellectual renaissance. It is quite true that the repressive protection was turned mainly against the ablest men, who did their work in opposition to it; but Buckle's argument was that under protection in general all genius tends to die out. He says in so many words<sup>1</sup> that Louis XIV.'s policy with the intellectual classes "ended by destroying all their boldness, stifling every effort of original thought, and thus *postponing for an indefinite period the progress of national civilisation.*" In point of fact, he immediately afterwards shows that a remarkably free and enlightened literature sprang up under Louis XV. in the teeth of the most determined repression, court favour being all the while bestowed on orthodox writers, just as it had been under Louis XIV. It is abundantly plain that his explanation breaks down. The main causal condition is clearly the withdrawal of the bulk of the nation's energies during long periods from the business of war. There were more students, more writers, and more readers; and the resort to English culture and science at the outset of the period was in great measure the expression of the energetic curiosity of the released intelligence of the more active and enterprising part of the population.

And just as he has failed to recognise the real causes of the French royalism under Louis XIV., the intellectual decline towards 1700, and the recovery after 1720, Buckle fails here to acknowledge the main causes of the greater freedom in England in the same period, namely, the con-

<sup>1</sup> II. 212.



tinuous disturbance of the royalist superstition by the circumstances of (*a*) the Catholicism of James, which repelled the majority of his subjects; (*b*) the doubtful title and the foreign nationality of William, a prince from a hostile nation, who was jealously viewed from the first; (*c*) the personal weakness of Anne; (*d*) the foreign nationality of George, who was hated by one party and grudgingly tolerated as a foreigner by the nation in general; (*e*) the fact that the two first Georges could not speak the language of their subjects, and had to leave the whole business of governing to Ministers, who in turn were always under the fire of the Tory Opposition. Yet he had duly noted the importance of the last circumstance in an earlier chapter;<sup>1</sup> and the argument is obviously extensible. Had James II. remained in the Church of England, English royalism could easily have gone as far as French. Had Anne left a son to succeed her, the interrupted current of superstition would have flowed with redoubled strength. It is unfortunate that, after giving an excellent explanation of the older divergences of political development between France and England, Buckle should have failed to see these causes of later divergence, and should rather have used language tending to give colour to the opinion that the later English development was due to some virtue in the English people. He quotes passages to show that the French were and claimed to be peculiarly royalist. But similar passages could be found in English literature, bearing on England. He has forgotten Burke's "We fear God: we look up with awe to kings."

And this quasi-patriotic bias manifests itself in his earlier generalisation<sup>2</sup> that

"in prose, in poetry, and in every branch of intellectual excellence, it will be found on comparison that we were before the French nearly a whole generation; and that, chronologically, the same proportion was preserved as that between Bacon and Descartes, Shakspeare and Corneille, Massinger and Racine, Ben Jonson and

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<sup>1</sup> I. 441.

<sup>2</sup> II. 103.

Molière, Harvey and Pecquet. . . . Among those who cultivated the same department, the greatest Englishman, in every instance, preceded the greatest Frenchman by many years. The difference, running as it does through all the leading topics, is far too regular to be considered accidental."

The fallacy of this schema will be very evident when we go back to Buckle's own earlier account of the influence of Montaigne and Charron, not to speak of Rabelais. These are wholly excluded from the table of relative progression, which is made to start with Bacon as a kind of *fons et origo boni*. Now, we know that Montaigne influenced Shakspeare and his contemporaries; and he and Charron alike must have aided the movement of Bacon and Hobbes. It is further purely arbitrary to put Descartes as deriving from Bacon rather than Locke as deriving from Descartes, when we actually know that Locke studied and profited by Descartes; and though there are occasional resemblances between Jonson and Molière, it is as certain that Molière did not form himself on Jonson as that he is by far the greater master of the comedy of character. Similarly there is no proper sequence between Hooker and Pascal, since Pascal's merits and labours are wholly different from Hooker's; and Buckle's own footnote explaining that they are "the two most sublime theological writers either country' has produced" only emphasises the vagueness of the connection. The coupling of Massinger and Racine again seems simply fantastic; as indeed it is to suggest that Corneille in any sense derives from or intellectually follows upon Shakspeare. The schema is essentially wrong: it sets up an imaginary nationalistic mode of progression and passes aside from the real modes of progression. Certainly the two nations reacted on each other again and again, and England powerfully affected France in the eighteenth century; but the influence was returned, and the process is not a matter of England being always a step ahead. In fact, Buckle confutes himself by declaring later<sup>1</sup> that

<sup>1</sup> II. 214.

at the end of the seventeenth century almost nobody in France knew the English language. It would follow that it was not very much known before 1661, else it could hardly have been so disregarded in the next generation. But certainly the French at 1661 knew next to nothing of Shakspeare; and there is nothing to show that Descartes was much influenced by the Latin works of Bacon, though he promptly accepted the discovery of Harvey, as well as Aselli's discovery of the lacteals, which Harvey rejected.

### § 3.

This last issue, however, bears only indirectly on Buckle's argument against intellectual protection; and it is important that that should be fully grappled with. And in order to do this on general grounds it will be well to cite in full Buckle's general argument:—

“Every nation which is allowed to pursue its course uncontrolled, will easily satisfy the wants of its own intellect, and will produce such a literature as is best suited to its actual condition. And it is evidently for the interest of all classes that the production shall not be greater than the want; that the supply shall not exceed the demand. It is, moreover, necessary to the well-being of society that a healthy proportion should be kept up between the intellectual classes and the practical classes. It is necessary that there should be a certain ratio between those who are most inclined to think and those who are most inclined to act. If we were all authors, our material interests would suffer; if we were all men of business, our mental pleasures would be abridged. In the first case, we should be famished philosophers; in the other case, we should be wealthy fools. Now it is obvious that, according to the commonest principles of human action, the relative numbers of these two classes will be adjusted without effort by the natural, or, as we call it, the spontaneous movement of society. But if a government takes upon itself to pension literary men, it disturbs this movement; it troubles the harmony of things. This is the unavoidable result of that spirit of interference, or, as it is termed, protection, by which every country has been greatly injured. If, for instance, a fund were set apart by the State for rewarding butchers and tailors, it is certain that the number of these useful men would be needlessly augmented. If another fund is appropriated for the literary classes, it is as certain that men of letters will increase more rapidly than the exigencies of the country require. In both cases, an artificial

stimulus will produce an unhealthy action. Surely food and clothes are as necessary for the body as literature for the mind. Why then should we call upon government to encourage those who write our books, any more than to encourage those who kill our mutton and mend our garments? The truth is that the intellectual march of society is in this respect exactly analogous to its physical march. In some instances a forced supply may indeed create an unnatural want. But this is an artificial state of things, which indicates a diseased action. *In a healthy condition, it is not the supply which causes the want, but it is the want which gives rise to the supply.* To suppose therefore that an increase of authors would necessarily be followed by a diffusion of knowledge, is as if we were to suppose that an increase of butchers must be followed by a diffusion of food. This is not the way in which things are ordered. Men must have appetite before they will eat; they must have money before they can buy; they must be inquisitive before they will read. The two great principles which move the world are the love of wealth and the love of knowledge. These two principles respectively represent and govern the two most important classes into which every civilised country is divided. What a government gives to one of these classes it must take from the other. What it gives to literature, it must take from wealth. This can never be done to any great extent without entailing the most ruinous consequences. For the natural proportions of society being destroyed, society itself will be thrown into confusion. While men of letters are protected, *men of industry* will be depressed. *The lower classes can count for little in the eyes of those to whom literature is the first consideration.* The idea of the liberty of the people will be discouraged; their persons will be oppressed; their labour will be taxed. The arts necessary to life will be despised, in order that those which embellish life may be favoured. While everything is splendid above, all will be rotten below. . . . Even the class for whom the sacrifice has been made will soon decay. Poets may continue to sing the praises of the prince who has bought them with his gold. It is however certain that men who begin by losing their independence will end by losing their energy. *Their intellect must be robust indeed if it does not wither in the sickly atmosphere of a court. . . .*<sup>1</sup>

If this passage had been treated with asperity or even contempt by the average run of Buckle's critics, it would for once have been difficult to gainsay them. The reasoning, it will be observed, is absolutely deductive or *a priori*, when in this of all cases there was peremptorily necessary that inductive method which Buckle had applauded and

<sup>1</sup> II. 184-186.

commonly employed ; and where it sets out with a general proposition as to the action of "governments" it ends by identifying all such action with "the sickly atmosphere of a court." We are listening, not to the inductive historian of civilisation, but to the prejudging partisan of *laissez-faire*, expanding the lore of Adam Smith. Smith put the case thus <sup>1</sup> :—

"In professions in which there are no benefices, such as law and physic, if an equal proportion of people [with that of the clergy] were educated at the public expense, the competition would soon be so great as to sink very much their pecuniary reward. It might not then be worth any man's while to educate his son to either of those professions at his own expense. They would be entirely abandoned to such as had been educated by those public charities, whose numbers and necessities would oblige them in general to content themselves with a very miserable recompense, to the entire degradation of the now respectable professions of law and physic.

"That unprosperous race of men commonly called men of letters are pretty much in the situation which lawyers and physicians probably would be in, upon the foregoing supposition. In every part of Europe the greater part of them have been educated for the church, but have been hindered by different reasons from entering into holy orders. They have generally therefore been educated at the public expense ; and their numbers are everywhere so great, as commonly to reduce the price of their labour to a very paltry recompense."

Here we have that air of calm reflection and impartiality which so strengthens Smith's hands in general ; but at the same time enough of obstinate special pleading and false fact to explain the impatience of German economists with him as a philosopher, if not the wild scurrility of Mr Ruskin. In the first place Smith had himself been brought up "at the public expense," inasmuch as he was university bred, had been sent to Oxford on a bursary, and had lived at the public expense in so far as he held a monopoly office created by Government action, to wit, a college professorship. He had acquired much of his knowledge and gained much of his leisure at the public expense ; and when he resigned his professorship and went into retirement after travel he was maintained by the Duke

<sup>1</sup> B. I, ch. x. part 2.

of Buccleuch, who continued to pay him £300 a year after he had acted for a short time as his travelling tutor. Later he received a commissionership of customs, which was almost a sinecure.<sup>1</sup> Secondly, he has gravely falsified the facts as to the professions of law and physic. These are both monopoly professions, maintained as such by legal action; and competition in them is thus artificially restricted to begin with. Thirdly, the practitioners of law and physic were and are as much educated at the public expense as most of the clergy, inasmuch as they too are trained—or at least then were and now are in Scotland—in universities supported by the State and “public charity.” Fourthly, many hundreds of lawyers, then and now, have been as unprosperous as the bulk of men of letters, the only difference being that lawyers are usually sons of well-to-do people. The bulk of the barristers who enter even the close law corporations do not earn their living. What becomes of half the doctors it is very hard to say. Fifthly, it is a monstrous figment to represent that the greater part of the men of letters of Smith’s day had been educated for the Church. Let us take the writers of his century—Dryden, Pope, Addison, Steele, Defoe, Arbuthnot, Gray, Collins, Cowper, Gay, Chatterton, Campbell, Mackenzie, Burns, Goldsmith, Johnson, Fielding, Richardson, Smollett, Gibbon, Sheridan, Burke, Franklin, Akenside, Montesquieu, Diderot, Rousseau, Voltaire, Goethe, Lessing, Schiller, Kleist, Condorcet, Wieland, Uhland, Vauvenargues, Helvétius, D’Alembert, had none of them been educated for the Church any more than Smith himself; and his theory of the cause of the “unprosperousness” of men of letters is thus a complete fiasco. Goldsmith and Smollett were trained for medicine; Chatterton and Cowper were trained for law, and their impecuniosity is not to be set down any more than Fielding’s or Burns’s or Johnson’s to the competition of university men trained for the Church. The vice of the whole argument and doctrine lies in Smith’s refusal to see that good literature lives by the

<sup>1</sup> *Memoir* in 1831 ed. of *Wealth of Nations*, p. xii.

non-commercial enthusiasm of men who either are endowed with inherited or professionally earned incomes, or prefer literature with poverty to wealth with commerce. The clerical men of letters in his century were as often as not enabled to become writers by their professional incomes. Swift and Sterne were clerics, and as men of letters they were prosperous; as were Arbuthnot and Akenside, doctors both. Similarly many French abbés wrote books on ecclesiastical incomes. It would have been economically more plausible to say that the competition of men who had private or professional means—as Pope, Swift, Arbuthnot, Gray, Sterne, Gibbon, Richardson, Voltaire, Akenside, Hume, Smith, Robertson—made life harder for the men who had to live by their work. But any explanation which does not insist on the spontaneousness, the comparative gratuitousness of the bulk of literary and scientific work in this country thus far, is sociologically and economically imperfect. Smith himself admits that “before the invention of printing, a scholar and a beggar seem to have been terms very nearly synonymous,” and that “governors of universities often granted licenses to their scholars to beg.” But even this knowledge does not open his eyes to the fact that it is not the charity or the public endowment that has drawn men to study and literature, but the passion for these that has led men to face beggary and hardship. He writes that “the usual reward of the eminent teacher bears no proportion to that of the lawyer or physician, because the trade of the one is crowded with indigent people who have been brought up to it at the public expense; whereas those of the other two are encumbered with very few who have not been educated at their own.” Here again he perverts the case, suppressing the facts that the lawyers and doctors have been educated at the endowed universities, and that their trades are artificially created monopolies, whereas teachers and writers undergo unlimited competition; and that even with their trade unions the lawyers and doctors cannot all find employ-

ment. Smith would do anything rather than admit that *laissez-faire* and free self-interest could work misery or disaster. But the strangest thing of all is that, writing of "teachers of the sciences," he will not reflect that some of the greatest gifts of science had only been made possible by public endowments. Newton did his great work as a university Fellow, as a Professor, and as Warden and Master of the Mint; Copernicus had a professorship at Rome, and an ecclesiastical income in his own country; Galileo was a professor at Pisa and at Padua, and later was supported by the Medici at Florence; Gilbert was physician to Queen Elizabeth; Harvey was a salaried lecturer at St Bartholomew's Hospital, an institution supported by "public charity;" James Watt was for six years mathematical instrument maker to Glasgow University, with a house in the building; Linnæus had a travelling stipend from the Swedish Academy of Sciences, had other public endowments, and was a professor at Upsala University; Huyghens and Cassini, as we have seen, were provided for by Colbert; De Guignes did his great work on Oriental history in virtue of his salary as a State servant. The list could be indefinitely extended backwards and forwards. For all these facts, Smith has no eye<sup>1</sup>; and he offers an economic explanation of the poverty of teachers and writers which implies the inexpediency of a policy that had so enabled studious men to devote themselves to the highest pursuits.

Yet this is the general doctrine, unfounded in induction and vicious in its deduction, which Buckle places in the forefront of his particular explanation of the social and intellectual history of the reign of Louis XIV.—an explanation of which the fallacy has, I think, been already made clear. And to show how alien to his main method and his fundamental philosophy is the doctrine, how far it was an excrescence or acquired prejudice, common to the English

<sup>1</sup> Compare the obstinate apriorism of his doctrine here with the proposition before discussed (above, pp. 64-66) as to his inductiveness.



political thought of his day, it is sufficient to contrast the long extract above given with a few other utterances of his, as the passage already cited<sup>1</sup> on "the progress and diffusion of knowledge" giving us our arts, our sciences, our manufactures, our laws, our opinions, our manners, our comforts, our luxuries, our civilisation; "in short," the sentence concludes, "everything that raises us above the savages, *who, by their ignorance are degraded to the level of the brutes with which they herd.*" Contrast this with the Smithian passage about the "natural" and "spontaneous" condition and development of society. On that view, the savage state is perfectly "healthy;" and nearly every step by which men have passed from it to the civilised state has been "unhealthy," an "interference" with the "spontaneous" movement or stagnation of things. The uncivilised nation "easily satisfies the wants of its own intellect;" why then vilify it? The first diffusion of non-physical knowledge in east and west was through schools endowed and protected by the State or the King: what then can there be to rejoice over in a substantially morbid development of civilisation?

Take next the still more glaring antithesis of a passage in Buckle's *Commonplace-Book*,<sup>2</sup> vehemently arraiging the state of studious literature in England in the latter part of last century:—

"In literature the supreme chief was Johnson, a man of some learning and great acuteness, but overflowing with prejudice and bigotry. The little metaphysical literature which we did possess went on deteriorating at each stage of its progress, from Hartley to Priestley, and from Priestley to [Erasmus] Darwin. While the wretched work of Delolme on the English constitution was read with avidity, the profound and yet practical inquiries of Hume were almost neglected. In ecclesiastical literature, the most prominent names were Warburton, the bully, and Hurd, the sneak. . . . In 1776, Hume writes to Gibbon, 'But among many other marks of decline, the prevalence of superstition in England prognosticates the fall of philosophy and decay of taste.' And in the same year he writes to Adam Smith in a similar strain. The fear entertained of the

<sup>1</sup> Above, pp. 328-329.

<sup>2</sup> *Miscellaneous Works*, i., 206-207.

French Revolution gave an influence to such women as Hannah More, and they tended still further to depress our literature. . . . We produced no historian. Gibbon was indeed an exception, but he was a Frenchman in everything except the accident of his birth. . . . In 1771 there was translated into English Millot's wretched history of England. . . . *Such was the want of energy* that, although we possessed a settlement in India since early in the seventeenth century, it was not until the end of the eighteenth that Sanscrit was first studied in England; and during a hundred and fifty years of our domination there were only to be found in the whole of the East India Company two persons acquainted with the Chinese language. *While France, with scarcely any intercourse with China, had established a Chinese professorship in Paris, our own government, intent on nothing but wealth and military power, had not taken a single step in that direction.* . . . It is a melancholy consideration that the only great historian we produced in the eighteenth century was Gibbon, a notorious Deist. The most celebrated Whig historian was Mrs Macaulay, a foolish and restless democrat; and while she was still alive, Dr Wilson erected in the chancel of St Stephen's, Walbrook, a statue to her."

Giving due heed to the fact that this is an extract from a commonplace-book, not a passage prepared for publication, and that, if we may judge from such phrases as the "notorious Deist" and the "foolish and restless democrat," it was written some time before Buckle published his first volume, it would still be hard to understand his having written it, save on the view that his doctrine of *laissez-faire* was a hastily-reached opinion, not growing out of his historical knowledge. This survey is plainly irreconcilable with the optimism which is satisfied that "every nation which is allowed to pursue its own course uncontrolled will easily satisfy the wants of its own intellect, and will produce such a literature as is best suited to its actual condition;" and that "an artificial stimulus will produce an unhealthy action." It explicitly condemns the English Government for not protecting research as the French did. It is true that in his book Buckle not only shows that George III. directed all his influence after the French Revolution to the suppression of every form of free discussion, but asserts, in conflict with the passage in the Commonplace-Book, that the political

action thus set up "took place in spite of a great progress, both social and intellectual."<sup>1</sup> But even though we independently note the literary advance alongside of the backwardness in research,<sup>2</sup> these corrections will not save Buckle's argument. The facts as to the scholarship of the time remain; and the fact of George's repressive protectionism cannot on Buckle's view account for the defect, since he shows how the most audacious inquiry went on in France in defiance of the repression of Louis XV.; while his doctrine on protection implies that the establishment of a professorship of Chinese by a Government can only do harm to research. The truth is, his inductive knowledge and his *a priori* politics clash; and his teaching only becomes valid when the deductive advocacy of *laissez-faire* is eliminated. The residual truth as to the England of George III. is (1) his remark in his note-book that the Government, "intent on nothing but wealth and military power," did nothing to encourage learning or science; and (2) that the devotion of the bulk of the nation's energy to mere wealth-seeking left England behind both France and Germany in the higher studies.

Either then we are to rejoice with the later and Smithian Buckle that the English Government did nothing to promote knowledge, or to note with the earlier and inductive Buckle, who seems to be in the main the Buckle of the chapter on the "English Intellect from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries," that the neglect of nearly all intellectual ability by George and his Ministers, at a time when State action was needed to counteract the overwhelming bent of the population towards mere money-getting, is one of the facts which stand to their discredit, and represents a retardation of English progress no less than their attempts to suppress political freedom, and their lamentable resort to war with France. And if we do not take this latter attitude, we shall again be brought up standing by the same difficulty when we come to Buckle's

<sup>1</sup> I. 455; also pp. 497-8.

<sup>2</sup> The point is dealt with in a paper in *Our Corner*, June 1888, p. 342.

later account of the special characteristics of German and American culture. He planned<sup>1</sup> for the final sections of his work, a study on the one hand of the German civilisation as illustrating the causes and effects of a great accumulation of culture in a learned class without its being diffused among the mass of the people,<sup>2</sup> and on the other hand, of the civilisation of the United States as illustrating the converse case of a great diffusion of popular culture without any notable accumulation in a learned class. Of the Germans, he declared that "it is undoubtedly true that since the middle of the eighteenth century they have produced a greater number of profound thinkers than any other country. I might perhaps say, than all other countries put together ;"<sup>3</sup> but that on the other hand

"the German intellect, stimulated by the French into a sudden growth, has been irregularly developed, and thus hurried into an activity greater than the average civilisation of the country requires. The consequence is that there is no nation in Europe in which we find so wide an interval between the highest minds and the lowest minds. The German philosophers possess a learning and a reach of thought which places them at the head of the civilised world. The German people are more superstitious, more prejudiced, and, notwithstanding the care which the government takes of their education, more really ignorant, and more unfit to guide themselves, than are the inhabitants either of France or of England."<sup>4</sup>

Now, that there is still a measure of truth in this account of German lay life we have already seen<sup>5</sup>; but for one thing, it is much less true to-day than it was in 1858; and for another, Buckle's explanation of it is wrong, and wrong in a way that is readily to be gathered from the fact of the change that has taken place. He stated his case, so far as he has indicated it, and as against Kay's eulogy

<sup>1</sup> I. 243.

<sup>2</sup> It is interesting to note here the corroboration given by an earlier statement of Zumpt:—"In England the educational establishments and teachers appear to be fettered by old traditional and conventional forms; while in Germany, the sublimest truths which are promulgated from the professorial chair, die within the lecture rooms of the universities, and produce no fruit." Pref. to Eng. trans. of his *Latin Grammar*, 1845.)

<sup>3</sup> I. 237.

<sup>4</sup> P. 238.

<sup>5</sup> Above, *Introduction*, p. 5, and pp. 149-153.

of the German system of compulsory education, on the alleged facts, (1) that the Germans notoriously had no aptitude for self-government and administration ; and (2) that "there are more popular superstitions in Prussia, the most educated part of Germany, than there are in England, and that the tenacity with which men cling to them is greater in Prussia than in England." Both of these things might be true in 1858,<sup>1</sup> and yet they would not at all amount to a support of Buckle's explanation, which was that the system of Government interference, of protection, could never avail to quicken the progress of the mass of a nation. They could be at once explained by the fact that in 1858 England was already a highly commercial country, and as such in touch with all the world, while Germany, though it had a better school system, lacked the great educative influence of copious contact with other nations for many of its people, who, besides, were then far more located in the country and less in the towns than they are to-day. Germany is now a commercial country, turning more widely to industrialism year by year ; and Prussia is certainly not now very superstitious relatively to England. The cause of the change then is to be looked for in the changed industrial and international conditions ; for the "protective" system remains very much the same. And similarly with the faculty of self-government. The Germans a generation ago showed little of it because they had had little educative experience. To-day matters are in a very different posture ; and though the Government resists the political movement, the people are every year showing a more general determination to control their own social and political destinies. Finally, Buckle's thesis destroys itself, inasmuch as he is bound to admit that the great development of the learned class is a result of the great creation of university machinery by the Government. If that be

<sup>1</sup> Parker (*Works*, xii. 126, *note*) disputed Buckle's view, which he surmised to be founded on impressions of South Germany, and which he flatly declared to be "not true of Prussia or Saxony."

possible, it follows that the Government can in some measure at least advance the culture of the mass of the people by means of the schools—an item which explodes Buckle's argument about butchers and food.

And this conclusion is driven home once for all by the facts of the correlative case of the United States, as stated by Buckle himself.

"The stock of American knowledge is small, but it is spread through all classes; the stock of German knowledge is immense, but it is confined to one class. Which of these two forms of civilisation is the more advantageous is a question we are not now called upon to decide. It is enough for our present purpose that in Germany there is a serious failure in the diffusion of knowledge, *and in America a no less serious one in its accumulation.* And as civilisation is regulated by the accumulation and diffusion of knowledge, it is evident that no country can even approach to a complete and perfect pattern if cultivating one of these conditions to an excess it *neglects the cultivation of the other.* Indeed, from this want of balance and equilibrium between the two elements of civilisation, there have arisen in America and in Germany *those great but opposite evils which, it is to be feared, will not be easily remedied, and which, until remedied, will certainly retard the progress of both countries,* notwithstanding the temporary advantages which such one-sided energy does for the moment always procure."<sup>1</sup>

The logical analysis of this passage is a curious experience. Presumably Buckle meant to imply that the policy of compulsory education in America had done harm by diffusing knowledge<sup>2</sup> to an extent out of proportion to the cultivation of it, as the policy of university education in Germany had done harm by disproportionately accumulating knowledge. But the social facts covered by his formulas can only be realised if we translate them in terms of class life, and say that in Germany there have been developed too many learned specialists, and in America

<sup>1</sup> I. 242.

<sup>2</sup> Parker (*Works*, xii. 149) disputed the diffusion. "We wish it were true," he writes, "that knowledge is so widely diffused as Mr Buckle says. Acquaintance with literature is certainly quite rare." But this must mean literature in the widest sense; and Parker on the other hand strongly disputes Buckle's statement that in America there had been little study of physical science. It was certainly misleading.

too many unlearned readers. Even now, however, it is not at all clear wherein the concrete evil lies—what harm is done to life and progress in general by the “excess”; and the “too many” threatens to lapse into a purely verbal proposition—“too many writers for the readers,” “too many readers for the writers.” It is not shown that the German writers are any the worse, save in so far as they are apt to be unpractical; and if it is meant that the German public suffers for lack of diffused knowledge, the obvious answer is, that on the one hand they would in the terms of the case have had no more knowledge if the learned class had not been so developed;<sup>1</sup> and on the

<sup>1</sup> Buckle does press the point that the style of the German philosophers is so complicated and difficult that “to their own lower classes it is utterly incomprehensible”; and he might perhaps have gone further, and asked whether it is always comprehensible to the specialists themselves. Richter bears him out here (see the humorous passage in *Der Campaner Thal*, 503 Stazion). But if Buckle supposed that Berkeley or Mr Spencer is any more intelligible to the “lower classes” in England, he was badly mistaken. And when he says that in Germany the “*great authors* address themselves not to their country, but to each other,” he is quite misleading. He is apt thus to leave *belles lettres* out of sight in speaking of literature. Schiller has certainly been as widely read in Germany as any author has been in England; and Goethe is a good deal less obscure than Browning; while Heine is one of the most lucid writers in literature. German prose style is a hundred years behind our own in evolution, but it is developing. On the other hand, the very quality of aloofness from the people, which Buckle ascribes to the German writers, is by Taine expressly ascribed to the French. He dwells on the “opposition in France of culture and nature,” and decides that “it is rare in France to meet a great writer who is popular” (*Lafontaine et ses Fables*, ch. iv.), applying this not only to past ages but to his own day. “The books produced in Paris do not penetrate to the public” (p. 60). And he expressly contrasts France in this respect with Germany. “In Germany, on Sunday, a servant reads and listens to Schiller . . . in every Protestant country the Bible, at least, is read and even felt by the people” (*id. ib.*). Thus do apriorisms clash. Taine like Buckle had in this matter his prepossession. Yet when he came to study England, he gave a sufficiently different picture of the “Protestant” populace. On the other hand, we have M. Bossert declaring, in accord with Taine’s first view:—“In Germany, the public which judges intellectual products is the entire nation: it is the society of the large towns, the youth of the schools, the artisan, the peasant, everybody. With us, long ago, and perhaps still, there is a little select world, a little France within the great, a sort of literary France, having its taste which it proclaims, its traditions which it defends, its rules which it imposes” (*Goethe, ses Précurseurs et ses*

other hand, they as a class have in terms of Buckle's doctrine the amount of knowledge suited to their stage of development. Again, the diffusion of knowledge in America must clearly be due in part to the system of compulsory education, to which Buckle would allow no credit in Prussia ; though the heterogeneity, the stir and ferment of American life, flowed-into and blown-upon from every part of the world, is an important part of the causation of the general freedom from the more primitive superstition which holds its ground so clingingly in Germany. Yet again, the people of the United States, though from Buckle's point of view so much superior to those of Germany in the faculty of self-government, could not settle the question of slavery without a dreadful civil war. The inference is, surely, that political faculty is a matter of development, and that a new problem may be too much for the statesmanship of even a nation with considerable political training.

But the final breakdown of Buckle's thesis takes place over the admitted fact that in America there has been a "serious failure" in the accumulation of knowledge, that is, in the development of a learned and studious class. This admission can support only one conclusion, namely, that America is lacking in higher culture because there is too little public provision for it <sup>1</sup> in proportion to the impetus of the immense majority of the people towards wealth-

*Contemporains*, 1872, p. v.). Contrast with this again Arnold's remark (*Higher Schools of Germany*, p. 213), quite true in itself, that massive German works which do not get translated into English are promptly translated into French. In face of such contradictions and self-contradictions all round, we may well distrust our own as well as other people's estimates of "national characteristics." The prevailing fallacy seems to be an attribution to our own or another nation of characteristics which are more or less common to all nations of a similar culture-stage.

<sup>1</sup> It is to be noted that even the teachers of the common schools in the States were for long very poorly paid, a fact which showed the general indisposition to spend money on a culture class. See Grund, *The Americans*, (1837, i. 214)—a work remarkably friendly to American society of the time. Its remarks on the subject of culture are not always consistent with the passage above cited. Cf. pp. 26-31, 40.



seeking. The school system secures a measure of education for all ; but the university system is utterly inadequate to the ideal needs of the case,—the needs, that is, as seen by the lovers of light, not by the average dollar-hunter. The absorption of a whole nation in the struggle for wealth is one of the phenomena which confound the optimism of the school of *laissez-faire*. Mill, while of that school, recognised<sup>1</sup> that dollar-hunting had been pushed further in young America than even in old England. Buckle, doubtless recognising the same fact, avows an evil and calls for a remedy, but suggests none. Now, there are only two broad proximate remedies. One is, a general practice of university-endowment and reward for research by rich men, or by public subscription : the other is, a policy of university-creation and endowment of research by the State. If research and studious literature fail to flourish spontaneously in the country in which, above all others, there is the greatest diffusion of knowledge, the claim for the all-round beneficence of the commercial method is disproved once for all. And if it comes to arguing that it is better for the devotees of knowledge and science to look to the random munificence of rich men, or the fluctuating generosity of the subscribing section of the public, than to be placed as public servants earning their livelihood, the case for *laissez-faire* in this particular direction may be dismissed as collapsed.

We need not now dwell long on the *a priori* dogma that there is no need to provide for the higher literature any more than for the hat trade or the business of bakers and butchers. We have seen *a posteriori* what we might have assumed *a priori*, that the mass of mankind needs no encouragement to follow the trades which supply the primary needs and are surest of yielding a profit or a wage. Whether the competitive scramble is a good way of supplying any needs whatever is another and a greater question, which cannot be discussed in this connection. All we need here state is that the competitive scramble

<sup>1</sup> *Principles of Political Economy*, 1st ed., B. iv. ch. vi. § 2.

can secure, at whatever cost of chronic poverty, wasted energy, and annihilated riches, a relatively large production of material or commonplace wealth, but neither a large supply of nor a large demand for that intellectual wealth which best makes life worth living. On the principle pushed by Buckle, solid literature could only be produced by those who, like himself, possess an unearned inherited income, or those who throw themselves on the bounty of others for support while they pursue their researches. And this last method of life he personally denounced, not on the score that it is humiliating and demoralising to the scholar, and that it should be superseded by a better plan, but by way of merely condemning literary men for getting into such a position. In his review of Mill's *Liberty*<sup>1</sup> he writes :—

“Literary men are, notwithstanding a few exceptions, more prone to improvidence than the members of any other profession ; and being also more deficient in practical knowledge, it too often happens that they are regarded as clever visionaries, fit to amuse the world, but unfit to guide it.”

To which Mr Huth adds<sup>2</sup>:— “He looked upon the profession of letters as so high that it was disgraced by this too common failing, and lost the power that was due to it, and good for the world, provided that failing was amended.” It is amazing that a man so devoted to the study of facts should overlook the main fact in the case, that impecunious literary men as a rule, like impecunious artists, are so because they have no unearned income, because literary work often requires long gestation, because the demand for it can never be relied on, and because the best and most laborious work is in general the worst remunerated.<sup>3</sup> Buckle penned his deplorably Pharisaic cen-

<sup>1</sup> *Fraser's Magazine*, May 1859, p. 515.

<sup>2</sup> *Life*, i. 49.

<sup>3</sup> On this head see the experience of the late Mr J. A. Symonds, as told by him in his *Memoirs*, edited by H. F. Brown, 1895, ii. 253-254. Buckle makes the strange statement : “Nearly every one who cultivates literature as a profession can gain by it an honest livelihood ;” adding, “and if he cannot gain it, he has mistaken his trade and should seek another.” This is the blindness that will not see.

sure in the security of a large income. He never needed to earn his living for a day. He never had to lose an hour from study in order to boil his pot. Mr Huth tells us<sup>1</sup> that "*His income was not large, and perhaps never exceeded £1500 a year. He was therefore obliged, if he wished to live comfortably, to live economically.*" And by these standards he could yet lecture for "improvidence" the men of letters who get into difficulties because they have no income but what they earn, and because a year's toil may fail to bring them a tenth part of the "not large" income of their censor. There are hundreds of educated men who would be only too glad to work their utmost at such tasks as Buckle's for a third part of it, and count themselves well off though they could only spend on books what he spent on cigars. Nay, they would count themselves fortunate to have for their whole support the £300 a year he was able to spend on books alone. Thus can the possession of unearned wealth distort a wise man's judgment on a point of social expediency. If Buckle's personal equation were to be the guide of society in this matter, the whole of the higher and more laborious intellectual work done in the world would be reduced to such as might come from men and women who inherited incomes. It is indeed notable how much good work the world has had on that footing. We owe Buckle's own performance, as we owe Darwin's, to the accident of an inherited income. Save for such income, neither could have done his work at all. Neither had the strength at once to fight the battle for livelihood and carry on a great research. Had Buckle been poor he could have done nothing without private or public "protection": he probably would not even have lived, so sickly was he in childhood. Nor could even Darwin, perhaps, have prepared himself aright but for the protection involved in the furnishing of the "Beagle." In any case, a moment's thought will suggest how miserably small, relatively to the total intellectual potentialities of mankind, is the amount of service humanity can derive through this one meagre

<sup>1</sup> *Life*, i. 47.

channel of combined capacity and unearned income. Not one in a thousand of the people with unearned incomes combines the capacity with the will to do society a solid service in return for his maintenance; perhaps not one in a hundred who has the will and the capacity possesses the means required for such a service. M. de Candolle has made an investigation<sup>1</sup> that puts the question in a clear light. Of 90 (out of a total of 92) foreign associates of the Paris Academy of Sciences, 41 per cent. are found to belong to the nobility or to aristocratic or rich families in their country; 52 per cent. to the middle class, and only 7 per cent. to have been born in the artisan and labouring classes. Among the similarly distinguished French savans of last century and this century he finds a considerably larger proportion of men born in the working class; and he shows that on the whole the distinguished men of science in France, during two centuries, have come in a larger proportion from the poorer classes than is the case in any other country. This is of course not a final test of the class conditions of the various countries; but it at least points to the latent possibilities of capacity in the hosts of the toilers. It would be folly to suppose that the actual percentages of men who reach distinction represent the proportions of potential mental faculty in the different classes. It is plainly a matter of opportunity. Either, then, we are to let all these potentialities lapse, and the growth of knowledge and the progress of society, after all our sociology, are to be determined by the competitive scramble of commerce in the future even more than in the past, or we must quash Buckle's doctrine of educational *laissez-faire*. We have already done so in establishing compulsory education, which it is to be feared he might have opposed in 1868 as he did in 1858, had he lived. But if we do not carry the principle of collective protection further, so as to secure the increased production of the strong meat of the mind as well as its milk for babes,

<sup>1</sup> See his *Histoire des Sciences et des Savants*, 1873, pp. 81-92.

we shall indeed give a new illustration for his doctrine of the futility of State action to raise the culture level and standard of life of the mass of the people. It will not be through having resorted to State action: it will be through having in our turn been as blindly optimistic as the political school of Buckle were in their day, and tried to cure our social malady with a little State action when the case needs a great deal, and a new thoroughness of social science in the general life besides.

#### § 4.

It follows from this long discussion that (8) Buckle's general doctrine on the futility of legislation is greatly overstrained. He urges in effect what Mr Huxley has termed, in the teaching of Mr Spencer, Administrative Nihilism.

"In the present state of knowledge, politics, so far from being a science, is one of the most backward of all the arts; and the only safe course for the legislator is to look upon his craft as the adaptation of temporary contrivances to temporary emergencies."<sup>1</sup>

It is not to be denied that this reproach against the current politics of the platform is largely deserved. It is perhaps little less deserved to-day than it was when Buckle wrote. But it is not more deserved than were Bacon's reproaches against the general management of the physical sciences in his day, or than were those of Descartes and Locke against the management of philosophical questions in theirs. There is no way of progress for mankind save through great errors to errors less and less great; and politics can no more stand still in despair than any other art or science; indeed it can less do so than any. And when we speak of Bacon we cannot but remember how he, the *a priori* censor of false methods in science, comported himself towards the concrete scientific truths which were being established in his own day. When real and great progress was being made, he could

<sup>1</sup> I. 504.

not recognise it. It would be very unjust to Buckle to say that in this regard he resembles Bacon. He was, as we have seen, abundantly awake to a hundred new ideas, and quick to anticipate scientific generalisations not yet made good. But the ablest man has his "blind spot" in the survey of things; and Buckle's would seem to have lain on the field of progressive politics. I have suggested, and I repeat my opinion, that his error was a matter of hastily accepting a common dogma of the English liberalism of his time. This seems the more likely when we remember that on the second page of his book, written years before its publication, he claimed for political economy that it had thrown much light "on the causes of that unequal distribution of wealth which is the most fertile source of social disturbance." It is difficult to believe that when he wrote this he had no hope of reaching any prescription for the disease. However that may be, there was for him no final remedy conceivable. It was so for most of the strongest brains of his day; and men who saw more clearly than he at this point were visionary or short-sighted at others. Such is the way of movement in all human affairs; and his own doctrine of averages goes deeper than he could at all times see. The corrective philosopher in turn is but a unit in the totality of true thinking; and it is only in the comparison and collation of the hits and misses of a hundred, mayhap, that we learn where the central truth lies.

It is here very relevant to remember that not only is Buckle's doctrine of Administrative Nihilism very much akin to that of Mr Spencer, whom some of Buckle's depreciators set so high in comparison, but Mr Spencer too can be shown to be inconsistent with his own main doctrines in his political teaching. He too has had to fall back, like Buckle, on the argument-in-a-circle that we are to follow "nature" in our proceedings, as if everything that we could do would not be part of "nature." And he too has indicated the answer to his own special pleading. Nor is it without significance that he is taxed

with his inconsistency by men who, seeing that his way is wrong, yet take no steps on the right way, as well as by men whose own way is worse still. So that once more we may say the systematic thinker's errors are more instructive than the random rightness of the systemless.

### § 5.

So far as my power of correction goes, we have now seen, I think, the main objections that can fairly be made to Buckle's doctrine as a body of practical instruction to men bent on understanding the conditions and laws of social life. There are, however, in Buckle's pages a number of detailed or detached propositions which seem to me faulty, usually by excess of emphasis; and I am fain to avow some of these, were it only by way of making more sure of that final judgment in his favour which I think justice must award. His merit can afford the strain of such demurrers as the following:—

1. In his first chapter,<sup>1</sup> he lays it down that "the most celebrated historians are manifestly inferior to the most successful cultivators of physical science: no one having devoted himself to history who in point of intellect is at all to be compared with Kepler, Newton, or many others that might be named." He adds in a footnote: "I speak merely of those who have made history their main pursuit. Bacon wrote on it, but only as a subordinate subject; and it evidently cost him nothing like the thought which he devoted to other subjects."

This is a forced comparison, inasmuch as it excludes Hume and Voltaire from the list of historians, while leaving Newton, who worked at Biblical chronology, among the men of science. But on any view the proposition will not stand. Newton and Kepler represent one great kind of capacity; but they also had a great capacity for quite commonplace error, and it is quite impossible to make any relative measurement of their powers as compared with

<sup>1</sup> I. 7.

those of Gibbon. They could not have done his work any more than he theirs.

2. In the same chapter<sup>1</sup> Buckle speaks of "what is called Nature" as constantly acting on men, stimulating and disturbing them, and therefore "giving to their actions a direction which they would not have taken without such disturbance." Without such disturbance *men would not exist*. The fault is his common one of lax phrasing of a proposition that ought to be logically exact.

3. The statement of "the great social law, that the moral actions of men are the product not of their volitions but of their antecedents,"<sup>2</sup> is fallaciously worded. All actions of men are the product of their antecedents: their volitions are in the same case.

4. Equally wrong is the phrase that "the actions of men, being guided by their antecedents, are in reality never inconsistent." If men are never inconsistent, the word can have no meaning at all: then the proposition itself is meaningless. The fallacy is the common one involved in such a phrase as "there is no *such thing* as chance." A charge of inconsistency is not a denial of causation but a charge of fallacy or falsity. Buckle's use of the word here is quite illegitimate.

5. In economics, Buckle repeats Smith's fallacious doctrine of parsimony with supererogatory fallacies of assertion, as the statement that a saved overplus of produce over consumption "increases itself."<sup>3</sup>

6. It will clearly not do to say with Buckle that the powers of Nature are "limited and stationary" while the powers of man are "unlimited."<sup>4</sup> Man is a product or part of Nature.

7. Buckle's use of the word "literature," as we have seen,<sup>5</sup> is sometimes confusing, and he seems to become confused in his ideas on the subject. In dealing with the French intellect he declares<sup>6</sup> that the English had by the close of the sixteenth century "produced a literature

<sup>1</sup> P. 20.

<sup>2</sup> P. 31.

<sup>3</sup> I. 42.

<sup>4</sup> Pp. 51-2.

<sup>5</sup> Above, pp. 161, 354, *note*.

<sup>6</sup> II. 8.



which never can perish." Sometimes by literature he means scientific, philosophic, and historical works, but here he must mean in the main *belles lettres*. Yet he adds: "But the French, down to that period, had not put forth a single work the destruction of which would now be a loss to Europe." This is only intelligible as referring to philosophic literature. If it is meant to apply to Rabelais and Montaigne, to say nothing of Villon, Ronsard, Marot, Du Bartas, and Regnier, the contrasted claim for the mass of English literature is meaningless.<sup>1</sup> In other passages, Buckle is further self-contradictory. He says once, "Literature in itself is but a trifling matter, and is merely valuable as being the armoury in which the weapons of the human mind are laid up;"<sup>2</sup> and in discussing the age of Louis XIV. he speaks of the resort from science to *belles lettres* as a sinking from high things to low.<sup>3</sup> Yet he calls Shakspeare "the greatest of the sons of men."<sup>4</sup>

8. There is clearly an oversight in the statement<sup>5</sup> that "no country can rise to eminence so long as the ecclesiastical power possesses much authority." To mention no other, the case of Spain upsets the generalisation.

9. In his otherwise excellent explanation of the development of the free institutions of England, Buckle, making one of his too frequent relapses into patriotic vaunting, writes that "the English aristocracy being thus forced by their own weakness to rely on the people, it naturally followed that the people imbibed that tone of independence, and that lofty bearing, of which our civil and political institutions are the consequences rather than the cause."<sup>6</sup> There is evidently confusion in the thought here. Both "tone" and institutions are, in the terms of the case, consequences of the given antecedent.

These are, I think, the worst, and indeed they are the majority, of the minor errors and oversights I have met with in reading Buckle, which have not been noticed in the foregoing chapters. They are the kind of errors that

<sup>1</sup> Compare the account of Scotch literature, iii. 184.

<sup>2</sup> I. 268.

<sup>3</sup> II. 205.

<sup>4</sup> II. 471.

<sup>5</sup> II. 8.

<sup>6</sup> II. 119.

nearly all writers make ; and a score of eminent hands, historical, scientific, and philosophical, have made more of the sort than Buckle. From the brilliant Green to the cautious Mr Bryce, from Gibbon to Professor Gardiner, from Berkeley to Mr Spencer, our men of light and leading yield us handfuls of such errors of fact, of phrase, of argument. If this be but duly remembered, Buckle's work will be seen to come out of all our crucibles not disproportionately reduced in bulk by the falling away of combustible matter. And when we note afresh how much of sound metal is left, how much of the fine gold of generalised truth, and of the silver of sifted knowledge, his credit may surely be reckoned valid for yet a while longer, in a world so full of disputation, doubt, and denial, concerning matters most vehemently affirmed.

## CHAPTER XII.

### THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIOLOGY.

ONE more survey is necessary to a decisive estimate of the value and status of Buckle; and that is, a critical survey of the scope and quality of what passes for sound or scientific sociology at present in quarters where he is denied authority. It would be inexpedient, to say the least, to offer a statement of his errors without shewing how much more serious are the shortcomings of most of his predecessors and rivals, considered as explainers of history and social growth.

#### § 1. *English Sociology before Buckle.*

First, however, in order to realise aright Buckle's importance in the development of English thought, it is necessary to glance at his immediate antecedents<sup>1</sup> in the matter of historical science. We have seen<sup>2</sup> that in the previous century the stimulus of Montesquieu, Voltaire, Goguet, Rousseau, and other French writers had set up a vigorous movement of sociological thought in Scotland; and to the names of Hume, Smith, Ferguson, Robertson, Millar, and Dunbar, already cited, we may add those of Gilbert Stuart,<sup>3</sup> of Henry,<sup>4</sup> and of Watson.<sup>5</sup> The histories of the

<sup>1</sup> The English Sociology of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and of the eighteenth down to Hume, is an interesting field for study, but it cannot be covered here.

<sup>2</sup> Above, pp. 8, 52.

<sup>3</sup> Author of a *View of Society in Europe in its Progress from Rudeness to Refinement*, 1778.

<sup>4</sup> Author of a *History of England* "on a new plan," and reputed translator of Goguet's *Origine des Lois*, &c. The "new plan" was essentially sociological, involving as it did separate studies of forms of progress.

<sup>5</sup> Author of the *History of Philip II.*

two last writers have not indeed survived even to the extent to which those of Robertson have done ; but they represent none the less an application of the new lines of historic investigation, albeit by clergymen. Scotland has never since exhibited any such general activity of humanistic study ; and in England also, where the new culture was naturally spreading, the reaction against the French Revolution threw back all broad rationalist thought at least a generation. Godwin<sup>1</sup> and his memorable wife, Mary Wollstonecraft,<sup>2</sup> represent the output at the Revolution of ideas developed before the reaction ; and after one or two reprints the sociological work of each passed into the shadow of disrepute. Continuous popularity, as regards innovating writing, was preserved only for such books as Paine's "Rights of Man," which however had mainly a working-class sale ;<sup>3</sup> and for nearly twenty years almost nothing in the way of comprehensive social science seems to have been produced. The first prominent sign of a renaissance is Owen's "New Views of Society" (1812) ; and though that and his "New Moral World" later made a considerable stir among some sections of the upper classes, in view of his notable experiments in community-framing, he never gained any hold over the educated classes.<sup>4</sup> The time was not come in England for systematic views of social development. What elements of liberalism had survived the reaction and

<sup>1</sup> *Political Justice*, 1793.

<sup>2</sup> *Vindication of the Rights of Women*, 1791.

<sup>3</sup> As regards Paine's political doctrine, it is to be noted that while in his early American work, *Common Sense*, he drew an individualistic contrast between society and government (which he later charged Raynal with plagiarising from him), declaring that society was made by our wants and government by our wickedness, he put forward in the second part of the later *Rights of Man* proposals of a semi-socialistic character, which impressed Pitt. It is significant that Jefferson, who like Paine was a Deist, and who had not the educative experience of life in London, remained a strong individualist in politics (Bryce, *American Commonwealth*, 3rd ed., ii., 6-12). Naturally the freethinkers of the time felt the proved dangers more than the humane possibilities of government (See Rayner's *Life of Jefferson*, 1832, pp. 131, 159, etc.).

<sup>4</sup> See above, p. 292, as to J. S. Mill's attitude ; and compare Macaulay, *Essays*, ed. 1856, ii. 101 (Essay on Southey's Colloquies).

the contagion of barbarity set up by the wars with Napoleon, had enough to do in struggling for steps of legal political and parliamentary reform. The best that could be done for the aristocratically ruled "nation of shopkeepers," with its habits of free competition and its hatred of abstraction, was to rationalise in part its legal system, which was largely done under the lead of Bentham ; and to develop for it on the basis of Adam Smith a system of free mercantile economics, which was done by James Mill, Ricardo, M'Culloch, Senior, and others, and later by the younger Mill. Scotland sent, instead of a David Hume, a Joseph Hume. The political theories of Bentham and James Mill alone, broadly speaking, represent systematic and reconstructive thought on political problems, save in so far as Coleridge gave something of humanity and philosophy to the literature of Toryism. The work of Hallam on the State of Europe during the Middle Ages (1818), though soundly critical, has in it nothing of innovating philosophy ; and his excellent Constitutional History of England (1827) is emphatically the work of a learned and judicious Whig, in striking contrast alike with the French temper of the pre-Revolution period and the new spirit of the post-Napoleonic school. The great treatise of Malthus, again, served for the time rather to fortify Toryism on the one hand, and to bottom the Ricardian mercantile economics on the other, than to form the basis of a new social science.

Sociological works of a certain kind were indeed being produced during the reactionary period ; and one or two, in particular the "Statistical and Historical Inquiry into the Progress and Magnitude of Population in Ireland," by Thomas Newenham (1805), which is still valuable, is memorable in that it expounds the principle of population independently of Malthus, whom Newenham had not read before writing his book,<sup>1</sup> and that it deals scientifically with a problem to which Englishmen had brought shamefully little of political science. In comparison, such a

Work cited, p. 5.

work as Joseph Lowe's "Present State of England" (1822), which offers a "Comparison of the Prospects of England and France," is now instructive only as showing the rapid rate at which industry was expanding in England as compared with France,<sup>1</sup> where however the intellectual activity was proportionately superior.<sup>2</sup> Lowe's eye dwells solely on the commercial facts: the English mind of the time is essentially unphilosophic. An Edinburgh Prize Essay "On the National Character of the Athenians," by a divinity student named Patterson (1828), shows abundant learning and some eloquence, but no original insight into historical causation. As rational discussion of politics and economics progressed, real approaches were made towards a general social science, chiefly in the reviews, as in the articles of John Stuart Mill. The essay on "Civilisation" by the Hon. A. H. Moreton, bearing the sub-title "A Brief Analysis of the Natural Laws that Regulate the Numbers and Condition of Mankind" (1836), shows some generalising power. But how little had been done in England to build up a really comprehensive sociology before Buckle may be learned from a perusal of the so-called "History of Civilisation and Public Opinion" by W. A. Mackinnon, M.P. (1846), which ran into three English and two French editions in as many years, and was also translated into Italian. This diffuse and weakly rhetorical performance received abundant praise in the press of both countries, though the author's tone towards France is insular and patronising to an absurd degree.<sup>3</sup> Its special doctrine—that the state of public opinion in any country is the measure of its civilisation—is purely verbal and vacuous; and the whole handling of historic detail and movement is piously unintelligent; its success thus constituting a proof

<sup>1</sup> See in particular the letter of Mr S. Gray to J. B. Say, quoted by Lowe, 2nd ed., appendix, p. 105.

<sup>2</sup> It is not to be disputed that in England there was a good product of scholarship pure and simple. It is interesting to remember that Fynes Clinton, the accomplished author of the great *Fasti Hellenici* and *Fasti Romani*, sat for twenty years in Parliament (1806-1826).

<sup>3</sup> Pref. to 3rd ed., p. xi.

of the low level of speculative thought in England at the time.

The English contribution to sociology in the first half of the century, then, is mainly to be looked for in political economy; and even on that side, the brilliant synthesis effected by John Stuart Mill (1848) was vitally faulty in that it rested on the great error of the *laissez-faire* school, from Smith onwards, the fallacy special to the species of society developed in England in the modern industrial period—the curious optimistic fallacy that unlimited saving can support unlimited industry. Mill's floundering in the attempt to buttress this fallacy, with a half-perception of its insolidity, form a grimly instructive chapter in economic science.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, his work has kept the field for over a generation, and has thus served to frustrate for so long the teaching of the more original economists—Lauderdale, Malthus, Sismondi, Chalmers, and others—who saw the confusion of Smith's doctrine and sought to correct it.

On the field of history proper, the development of social science was similarly imperfect. Great work was certainly done. James Mill's *History of India*, and Thirlwall's and Grote's *Histories of Greece*, raised afresh the credit of English historiography, which in the hands of Gillies and Mitford had hardly maintained the level set by Hume and Robertson, to say nothing of Gibbon.<sup>2</sup> But it did not

<sup>1</sup> See *Fallacy of Saving*, ch. v.

<sup>2</sup> It is noteworthy, however, that some of the German compilers of the early years of this century give Gillies and Mitford credit for the modern beginning of Greek historical studies. Thus Heeren writes that "Among the moderns, the English have most successfully treated the subject of Grecian history;" and, citing the works of Gillies and Mitford, he comments that "Mitford is perhaps superior in learning, copiousness, and solidity; but he certainly is greatly surpassed by Gillies in genius and taste, and more especially in a proper conception of the spirit of antiquity." On which the English translator inserts the parenthesis: "Few English critics will here coincide with our author" (Heeren's *Manual of Ancient History*, Eng. tr., ed. 1840, pp. 118-119). Hermann, again, notes that the "awakened interest respecting the political history of Greece arose particularly in England, in the latter half of the eighteenth century," and he cites Goldsmith (!), Gillies and Mitford, affirming that their works, "notwithstanding their defects, are far superior to the pert

belong to histories of India and Greece to lay down general views of the process of civilization ; and in any case neither Thirlwall nor Grote turned his great powers at all systematically to an interpretation of the course of things in Greece. Thirlwall, indeed, does more to that end in his less elaborate work than does Grote in his ; and a perusal of the former's history always sets up a regret that such capacity as his should have been in large part wasted on the church. Grote's monumental performance, again, perhaps proves that so much had to be done in the way of positive historical investigation and elucidation before a really sociological history of Greece is possible. As it is, it puts in a truer light much that the historians of the previous thirty years had seen with the eyes of anti-democratic partisans and pragmatists ; but it leaves the philosophy of Greek history still to be written. What Grote did not do was in part done independently, on the foundations laid by the German compilers, by W. Torrens M'Cullagh<sup>1</sup> in his useful "Industrial History of the Free Nations" (1846), of which the first volume deals with Greece and the second with Holland. But that too falls far short of being comprehensively scientific in its special fields.

It is needless to dwell on the work of the remaining historians proper before Buckle. Macaulay and Carlyle are rather literary than scientific minds. Of the two Macaulay did decidedly the more to make historical processes intelligible ; but with all his sense of the importance of putting a new interest into history he belongs to the school of picturesque narrative rather than to that of scientific interpretation. He represents above all things the peculiarly English form of Liberalism known to us as Whiggism ; and his splendid gifts never put him far in advance of the current public opinion of his time. His attitude towards Buckle<sup>2</sup> and towards the intellectual

dogmatism of the generality of French writers" (*Manual of the Pol. Antiq. of the Greeks*, Eng. tr. 1836, p. 5). Boeckh, however, speaks of Gillies with explosive scorn (*Public Economy of Athens*, Eng. tr. 1828, i. 11, 51, notes).

<sup>1</sup> Known later as M'Cullagh Torrens.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 26.



movement of his day is the measure of his development.

§ 2. *Comte.*

In an earlier chapter, discussing the strictures of Mr Leslie Stephen, I suggested that these, to have any force, should be backed up by a proof that some "experts" had succeeded where Buckle had failed. Mr Stephen offered no such proof, save insofar as he dogmatically asserted the superiority of Comte to Buckle: and on that head Mr Stephen's authority was perhaps sufficiently overborne by that of the writers cited against him. Comte's authority as a sociologist and political reasoner, indeed, hardly needs further arraigning to-day, any more than his authority as a religious founder and lawgiver: indeed there is rather a risk that his more valuable ideas may miss advantageous development by reason on the one hand of the unprogressiveness of his avowed adherents, and, on the other, of the sharp aversion he sets up in scientific minds with a different bias.<sup>1</sup> But he is still in a sense an accredited sociologist, were it only because of the survival of a specific Comtist school; and it may be well here to offer a simple statement of what he really did in sociology.

The special character of his more scientific work may best be understood by first noting that the general purpose of the *Philosophie Positive* is to correlate the sciences, and that sociology only emerges as the crowning or ultimate science,<sup>2</sup> by way rather of analogical and deductive derivation from the lower or simpler sciences than of inductive derivation from the facts of history. It is not our business here to go into the merits of Comte's classification of the sciences: we may all agree that his schema had great merit,<sup>3</sup> as a lead to generalising thought, whether or not

<sup>1</sup> The sympathetic monograph of Professor Edward Caird, *The Social Philosophy and Religion of Comte*, has great merit as a fair and judicious exposition by a non-Comtist; but does not aim at developing Comtism.

<sup>2</sup> This was clearly pointed out by Mr Huth, *Life of Buckle*, i. 223.

<sup>3</sup> See the weighty tribute of Professor Bain, *J. S. Mill*, p. 71. With regard to Dr Bain's praise of the "distinction between Social Statics and Social Dynamics," however, I may point out that it had already been made,

it is definitive. What we are concerned with is the peculiarly *a priori* character of his sociology as compared with his treatment of those sciences which he had specially studied. He expressly lays it down that sociology is not to proceed on a concrete study of history, for the reason that history itself—a “truly rational” history of the various existing beings, individual or collective—will only be “regularly possible” when at length the “entire system of the fundamental sciences” is completed. In fine, as there cannot be a proper history till we have a sociology, our sociology must pay as little regard as possible to history. From the “incoherent compilation of facts already improperly termed history,” it must borrow only “information capable of evidencing *according to the principles of the biological theory of man*, the fundamental laws of sociability.” In other words, the use of history in sociology must be “essentially abstract”; and “every actual attempt to constitute directly the highly complex history of human societies” is to be regarded as “chimerical.”<sup>1</sup> This is one of the many points at which Miss Martineau’s condensed version of the *Philosophie Positive* greatly improves its purport, giving a guarded and ostensibly reasonable form to a proposition which in the original is either a begging of the question or an argument in a circle. But in any form which can be given to it, the contention only serves, like so many of Comte’s contentions, to illustrate his personal equation. He will not let sociology proceed on history because he has no proper preparation in historical study; just as he would limit certain branches of specula-

as Mill noted (*Diss. and Disc.*, i. 447-452), by Coleridge in his formula of “Permanence and Progression;” and, further, that Coleridge was simply plagiarising Burke’s formula of “the two principles of conservation and correction” (*Reflections*, ed. 1790, p. 29).

<sup>1</sup> *Cours de Philosophie Positive*, 52ième Leçon. (4ième édit. vol. v. pp. 14-17). It will be seen that this passage goes far to quash the account of Mill, that Comte “looks upon the social science as essentially consisting of generalisations from history, verified, not originally suggested, by deductions from the laws of human nature” (*Logic*, B. vi. ch. ix., § 1). The converse statement would appear to be the true one. But cf. Mill’s *Autobiography*, pp. 210-211.

tion in terms of his own bent, and impose on all mankind rules of conduct which express the direction given to his own emotions by his private experience. His formula about an "abstract" use of history is but a blundering way of saying that he is going to make a *general* use of history. But he is substantially true to his purpose of subordinating his sociology to his biology; and herein he contravenes at once his own veto on the explanation of a higher order of phenomena in terms of a lower, and his veto of the "metaphysical" method of explaining phenomena.

For the outstanding feature of Comte's treatment of history is that it is much more often Metaphysical<sup>1</sup>—in the sense in which he uses the word in his *Law of the Three Stages*—than Positive or scientific; though a main part of his polemic is directed against the retention of the metaphysical method. In section after section he discusses the course of "Catholicism" and "Chivalry" as if these were entities in themselves, and without any elucidatory analysis of the forces actually at work. The result is a semi-mediæval panegyric of the Catholic Church, put in the dialect of a modern devotee of social regulation. As an account of European history it is the merest special pleading, and in the hands of the Master's disciples the general prejudice is developed into all manner of concrete injustice and falsification.<sup>2</sup> This is the more inexcusable seeing that even such a professedly Christian sociologist as Edgar Quinet, who in so many ways suggests Comte's fashion of historical generalisation, was even in Comte's day capable of seeing and stating<sup>3</sup> the harm done to civilisation by the Catholic organisation and spirit. Broadly speak-

<sup>1</sup> Compare Mill, who (*Logic*, B. vi. ch. iv., § 4) remarks that "no writer, either of early or of recent date, is chargeable in a higher degree" than Comte with the "aberration from the true scientific spirit" which is involved in treating mental differences as "ultimate facts, incapable of being either explained or altered."

<sup>2</sup> *E.g.*, Mr Cotter Morrison's *Life of Saint Bernard*, and the essay on that by Mr Frederic Harrison, in his volume *The Choice of Books*. The latter essay, I say advisedly, is one of the most uncritical and most zealously garbled accounts of a mediæval period in English literature.

<sup>3</sup> See his *Génie des Religions*, 1841.

ing, Comte's special pleading for "Catholicism" is as biased and unscientific as that of the Protestantism he is countering. He applauded the Catholic Church as he applauded the Czar Nicholas and the Third Napoleon, with an eye only to the mechanical or external-police side of the question, and with no fair attempt to study the psychological and social reactions.

In some cases, it is true, where his prejudices do not specially come into play, he takes a truly "positive" view of a historical phenomenon, as where he notes, not only the geographical dividedness of Greece,<sup>1</sup> but the effect of (a) that dividedness and consequent equipoise of the Greek Republics, and (b) the practical unity of speech throughout Hellas, in preventing the rise of any overwhelming military power among them. The Spartans he well describes, on this view, as "abortive Romans."<sup>2</sup> But even here his lack of knowledge prevented him from availing himself of further positive elucidations; and he has nothing to say of the culture-competition and contact of the Greek States in developing their civilisation, a point fully brought out by Hume, and glimpsed even by Goguet.<sup>3</sup> There is, however, a much worse instance at once of his ill-preparedness and of his consequent apriorism in his account of Montesquieu's doctrine on climate. He asserts in so many words that Montesquieu and his generation could not at all realise the general principle that "local physical causes, very powerful at the origin of civilisation, successively lose their empire in proportion as the natural development of mankind permits of their action being

<sup>1</sup> Comte seems to give credit for the recognition of this to Joseph de Maistre, whom he here cites as remarking that Greece was "*née divisée*." But this expression had in de Maistre's use of it (*Du Pape*, L. iv. ch. 11) no reference whatever to the geographical conditions. He had just before, on the contrary (ch. 9), denounced the Greeks for their divisiveness in the usual fashion, treating them as innately bad on this point. It was no part of de Maistre's philosophy to recognise the natural causation of human character. And he committed himself (ch. 11) to the verdict that "it will never be possible to establish a Greek Kingdom."

<sup>2</sup> *Philosophie Positive*, 53ième Leçon (v. 174-176).

<sup>3</sup> *De l'origine des lois, des arts, et des sciences*, 1758, III., L. ii., ch. 2.

neutralised."<sup>1</sup> Now, as we have seen above,<sup>2</sup> Montesquieu does distinctly though briefly touch on this very principle; and it was further developed by at least three Scotch sociologists after him, before the French Revolution, as well as by Auguste Comte's namesake Charles Comte, in his own day. The excellent "positive" work of the latter lay ready to the Master's hand; but he does not seem to have profited by it in the least degree. Rather he must needs frame a theory to the effect that Montesquieu would doubtless have "spontaneously" seen the true principle as to climate if he had only had the conception of progress in human affairs. And all the while the principle was actually stated in Montesquieu's book.

It thus appears that the service rendered to sociology by Comte, however great it may have been, does not lie in a sound interpretation of history. It is indeed vain to suppose that history can be elucidated without a good preliminary knowledge of it; and any one but a self-willed system-maker would have seen that the proper use in sociology of deductive clues from other sciences could not go beyond the suggestion of hypotheses, which in the terms of the case would require checking by inductive research. Lacking the necessary knowledge, he chose to make a merit and a claim of his disqualification. The value of his sociological work thus lies in a more or less fortuitous use of his power of generalisation, which, operating on different issues with very different degrees of light from knowledge, curiously illustrates the psychological truth underlying his Law of the Three Stages. That truth is, that the different ways of theorising on phenomena which he classes as the Theological, the Metaphysical, and the Positive, really stand for so many different degrees of *knowledge*, as well as reflection, on the facts. And as, by his own admission, the three states may coexist in a society, so they may coexist in an individual, in respect of his different degrees of enlightenment on different classes of phenomena. I have said that Comte largely exhibits the Metaphysical Method

<sup>1</sup> *Philosophie Positive*, 47ième Leçon (iv. 184).

<sup>2</sup> P. 51.

in his treatment of mediæval history ; but it would not be going too far to say that he at times becomes practically Theological. And the general explanation is that on different topics he had such different measure of preparation. He had metaphysical or theological conceptions on history, which, like his tutor Saint Simon,<sup>1</sup> he only viewed panoramically, even as positive workers in the physical sciences are every day seen to have metaphysical conceptions on the matter of social science. Thus, though his positive philosophy abounds in suggestions which stimulate thought, it is in but a small degree an elucidation of the laws of social movement ; and it can only be set above Buckle's work, as good science over bad, by those who have not compared the two men's writings. Their sociologies in point of fact rarely meet, inasmuch as Buckle is a great historian generalising historic facts, while Comte is primarily a scheme-maker bent on correlating the sciences, who frames his sociology in terms of a few biological analogies on a mere bird's-eye survey, and on fixed presuppositions.

And when we come to their respective prescriptions for society, if Buckle is to be pronounced unsatisfying, still more so is Comte. Buckle's *laissez-faire* at least leaves the ground free for fresh constructive action, and puts a wholesome caveat against hasty scheming. Comte's *Politique Positive* is one of the most disheartening products of professedly rationalistic thought, and might well suffice to put social reconstruction out of fashion for the rationalists of his generation. Nothing could be less truly positive than this attempt to play Moses and Lycurgus for the immense populations of the modern world. The dedication alone is enough to put the book out of court as a scientific performance. The great crux of our sociology, as we finally see, is the problem of present action ; and if we find cause to rule out one after another of our greatest

<sup>1</sup> On Comte's debt to Saint Simon for his idea of social regulation, and his idea of mediæval Catholicism, see *Saint-Simon et Son Œuvre*, par Georges Weill, Paris, 1894. Mr Morley, in his *Britannica* article on Comte, admits the debt, in the act of belittling Saint-Simon. Cp. Reybaud, *Études sur les Réformateurs Contemporains*, 1840, ch. ii., § 1.

sociologists' prescriptions as products of their private bias and temperament, least of all can we accept one which bears its merely personal source and sanction on the very face of it. Not by such hands as these can a bridle and a bridle-path be given to "the wild, living intellect of man."

Comte stands alone in his temerity. Of the other leaders in social science with whom we have to deal, none has so challenged to revolt the indestructible individual instincts of mankind. The natural result is, that though he alone has formed a school of co-operating partisans, the others have had more real influence on the general run of thought.

### § 3. *Spencer.*

Of the names associated with sociology in England, none is so magistral, by reason at once of the adherence of supporters and the deference of opponents, as that of Herbert Spencer. His has been the rare fortune to see, despite an almost life-long menace of curtailment from bodily frailty, his great plan of philosophic construction round itself out to something like completion; and the mere prestige and momentum of such a mass of reasoned and comprehensive thought secures him status as surely as it does criticism. Here, of course, it is impossible to attempt even an estimate of his total performance and influence. I have offered elsewhere a general view,<sup>1</sup> inadequate enough, of his work as a humanist, with a criticism of his political doctrine, as set forth in his more popular works. What we are here concerned to note is his conception of Sociology, his method, and his conclusions.

It is at once obvious that, like Comte, Mr Spencer as a sociologist only to a small extent stands in competition with Buckle; and I may here urge that the name of Sociology is much more appropriate to Buckle's work than to theirs. Sociology should surely involve a study of developed societies, as energising wholes. But Comte's is rather an exposition of an *a priori* idea of what a society ought to be, illustrated by forced versions of some past

<sup>1</sup> In *Modern Humanists* (1891).

social phases, than a study of actual social evolution; while Mr Spencer's is rather a tracing of the roots of social growths in primitive societies than a survey and science of the variations of societies in action. His Sociology, like Comte's, though with much more of concrete matter, and much less of doctrinary projection of ideals, is largely made up of what other inquirers now class as Anthropology,<sup>1</sup> Hierology, and Archæology; and while all these might reasonably be described as departments of a comprehensive Sociology, they cannot reasonably be held to constitute it to the exclusion of what is specially bound up in common thought with the idea of Society.

As regards Mr Spencer's actual treatment of causation in societies, we have seen part of the somewhat hostile judgment of M. Letourneau.<sup>2</sup> To all of that I cannot subscribe. It is true, I think, that Mr Spencer "is often led astray by *a priori* systematic conceptions;" and I am disposed to endorse M. Letourneau's protest against "his unwarrantable comparison between social and biological organisms." It may fairly be argued that Spencer and Schäffle alike have in that matter led Sociology off the right line of development. Spencer's own preliminary definition of the department of Sociology is, by implication, that it is the sphere of the Supra-Organic. On that view, it is not easy to see how the laws of the Organic can be so illustrative for sociological purposes as Mr Spencer assumes them to be. But I do not quite follow M. Letourneau's complaint that Mr Spencer's "exposition of facts is singularly unmethodical." The method of the "Principles of Sociology" is indeed not greatly different from M. Letourneau's own. And while it may be true that "in many of his conclusions Mr Spencer has run directly

<sup>1</sup> Dr Tylor, again, puts this matter under the head of *Primitive Culture*, while Sir John Lubbock deals with it as the subject matter of the *Origin of Civilisation*. But Dr Tylor consents to go over the same ground in his excellent *Manual of Anthropology*. M. Topinard, again, makes *Anthropology*, reasonably enough, a matter of comparative measurement of human types of skull, etc.

<sup>2</sup> Above, p. 117.



counter to noticeable facts, and to those which have been already established," I do not think that M. Letourneau's detail criticism on these points is always valid. For instance, his remark<sup>1</sup> that Mr Spencer "maintains that endogamy is *peculiar* to peaceful races of men" does not rightly represent the doctrine laid down in the "Principles of Sociology," which is<sup>2</sup> that a primitive peaceful group *must* be endogamous, that some tribes may be both endogamous and exogamous, and that endogamy tends to prevail as societies become less hostile. M. Letourneau on this point remarks that "the prudence of the serpent is a virtue which we ought not to grow tired of recommending to our present sociologists, who seem to be commissioned to found, or rather to sketch out, a theory of social science." I would venture to reply that while there can never be too much prudence in framing theories, the total abstention from them is likely to make sociology a much less important science than it can be made by their means; that in fact it is only by developing explanations that it can take rank as a science in the modern sense; and that M. Letourneau's own excellent surveys would be none the worse for a little infusion of a "theory of Social Science."

Mr Spencer is, to my thinking, more open to criticism in that he has given us so little "theory" of social variation as seen in history. At the outset, indeed, he does seem bent on supplying such generalisations, as when he formulates the genetic conditions of civilisation. There he fully realises the need of explanations, and there, it is to be observed, he follows the method and accepts the views of Buckle, though his customary attitude towards previous investigators keeps such assimilation well out of sight. And his tendency to put his own stamp on current results is not always advantageous, does not always promote exact thought: instance his account of the relation of climate to progress:—

"Contemplated in the mass, facts do not countenance the current idea that great heat hinders progress. All the earliest recorded

<sup>1</sup> *Sociology*, B. iv. ch. i., § 7, Eng. tr., p. 352.

<sup>2</sup> §§ 289, 290.

civilisations belonged to regions which, if not tropical, almost equal the tropics in height of temperature. India and Southern China, as still existing, show us great social evolutions within the tropics. The vast architectural remains of Java and Cambodia yield proofs of other tropical civilisations in the east ; while the extinct societies of Central America, Mexico, and Peru need but be named to make it manifest that in the New World also there were in past times great advances in hot regions. . . . I do not ignore the fact that in recent times societies have evolved most, both in size and complexity, in temperate regions. I simply join with this the fact that the first considerable societies arose, and the primary stages of social development were reached, in hot climates. The truth would seem to be that the earlier phases of progress had to be passed through where the resistances offered by inorganic conditions were least : that when the arts of life had been advanced, it became possible for societies to develop in regions where the resistances were greater ; and the further developments in the arts of life . . . enabled subsequent societies to take rest and grow in regions which, by climative and other conditions, offered relatively-great resistances.”<sup>1</sup>

This is a good generalised statement of a truth perceived and set forth more or less clearly, as we have seen,<sup>2</sup> by a number of previous writers—Montesquieu, Ferguson, Robertson, Dunbar, Herder, Charles Comte, Auguste Comte, Draper, and Buckle ; and the only criticisms it calls for are (1) that the air of newness in the statement is thus a little misleading ; and (2) that the first quoted sentence leaves a dilemma gratuitously unsolved. It is true that great heat hinders progress—beyond certain stages. The tropical and quasi-tropical civilisations referred to have in no case reached the European culture line ; and Mr Spencer's proposition needs to be corrected by that of the other sociologists named, which is most fully worked out by Buckle.

And the need for the rectification becomes still clearer when we go on to Mr Spencer's further proposition that, as there is “more bodily activity in the people of hot and dry localities than in the people of hot and humid

<sup>1</sup> *Principles of Sociology*, Vol. i., § 15, 3rd. ed., pp. 17-20. See also § 17, p. 28.

<sup>2</sup> Above, pp. 51-53, 226-228, 372.

localities,"<sup>1</sup> not only will civilisations grow up more readily in the former, but the races of the former will overrun others. For that matter, he might have gone so far as to adopt Buckle's demonstration<sup>2</sup> that heat and humidity together tend to stunt and crush civilisation, as in the case of Brazil. There are, broadly speaking, no cases of important civilisation in climates at once hot and humid, unless that of India is to be so described. But, further, the formula that the races of hot and dry climates tend to overrun those of other climates is distinctly misleading inasmuch as it ascribes to the elements of heat and dryness what is properly to be ascribed to priority in military and political organisation. We have only to take the cases of the conquests of the East by Alexander, and of Egypt by the Romans, the successive conquests of Italy by northern peoples, the reconquest of Spain from the Moors, and the conquest of India by the English, to see that races with relatively colder and moister climates may overpower those of hotter and drier. The generalisation of Charles Comte as to the tendency of the hunting peoples to overrun the agricultural (though it overlooks such conquests as those of semi-civilised nations by the ancient Egyptians and Assyrians) comes on the whole nearer the truth than Mr Spencer's.

When, again, Mr Spencer goes on to deal with the factor of heterogeneity of area,<sup>3</sup> while he rightly notes the special diversity of surface in Greece, and quotes Grote as to the ancient recognition of the difference of life between a maritime and an inland city, he does not bring out the fact that the element of variety and novelty of sensation and ideas comes into beneficent play only in the later or secondary culture stages, but rather groups it with the factors of the relatively primary civilisations, heat and fertility; though he does go on to note how the "higher and stronger" societies "descend" from these, and "inherit their acquired organization, appliances, and knowledge."<sup>4</sup>

Yet again, he obscures, by indecisive argument, a truth

<sup>1</sup> P. 21 (§ 16).

<sup>2</sup> Buckle, i., 101-108.

<sup>3</sup> P. 26.

<sup>4</sup> P. 28.

which Buckle had usefully set forth. "The belief that easy obtainment of food is unfavourable to social evolution," he writes, "while not without an element of truth, is by no means true as currently accepted. The semi-civilised peoples of the Pacific . . . show us considerable advances made in places where great productiveness renders life unlaborious." Now, the "belief" referred to can only be said to exist in connection with Buckle's demonstration of the effects of cheap food on the lot of the masses in the primary civilisations, or in a backward and mismanaged civilisation like that of Ireland; and the reference to the semi-civilised peoples of the Pacific is really beside the case. They obviously have progressed so far *by reason of* their food facilities. Buckle's doctrine of the "unfavourable" effect of cheap food bears on the civilisations between these and the higher: the point is that easy command of food promotes the primary civilisation, but, in the absence of reaction from the science of another society, prevents it from rising to the level of the secondary. A resort to Buckle would have enabled Mr Spencer to improve his doctrine on these points, and perhaps even to acquire a more dynamic conception of social movement, despite the fact that Buckle coincides with him in advocating *laissez-faire*.

For the rest, to affirm Mr Spencer's success in Sociology as against Buckle's is merely to overlook the fact that Mr Spencer does not attempt to grapple with Buckle's problems, and to suppress the fact that he fails to supply generalising principles where Buckle does supply them. He does indeed give a really dynamic explanation of social movement in the earlier stages in his section on "Political Institutions";<sup>1</sup> and he and his colleagues deserve great praise (too seldom accorded) for the great collections of facts as to barbaric and modern life in the monumental "Descriptive Sociology"; but the later collections have never been reduced to "Principles." Mr Spencer's Sociology is rather a comparative anatomy

<sup>1</sup> Sub-sections 2-10 (§§ 440-575).

of social institutions than a science of civilisation ; and as such, whatever be its encyclopedic merits, is really less fitted to instruct citizens for citizenship than the performance of Buckle. Clifford put the case with peculiar infelicity when he wrote that Mr Spencer "takes that experience of life which is not human, which is apparently stationary, going on in exactly the same way from year to year, and he applies it to tell us how to deal with the changing characters of human nature and human society."<sup>1</sup> The science of human society is not to be so taught ; and it only needs a perusal of Buckle in order to see as much. Even when the two writers coincide in prescribing *laissez-faire* in politics, Mr Spencer's abstract or biological apriorism is far more exclusive of practical guidance than Buckle's concrete or economic apriorism, though we must always end by admitting that Buckle comes short as a sociologist in that he failed to improve on the orthodox economics of his day. Buckle's surveys of social variation always keep us in view of the genetic play of impulse, of positive as well as negative progress, in human affairs ; and his prescription of *laissez-faire* finally detaches itself from his work, as a special doctrine of his day and country ; while Mr Spencer makes a persistent attempt to deduce it from the principles of organic nature and give it a Darwinian as distinct from a Smithian justification. Haply, however, it may be the more completely refuted when thus forced into the position of an absolute scientific law, as we have it in his *Principles of Sociology*.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Lectures and Essays*, 2nd ed. p. 89 (Lecture *On the Aims and Instruments of Scientific Thought*).

<sup>2</sup> An acute and damaging criticism of Mr Spencer's political philosophy will be found in Mr D. G. Ritchie's *Principles of State Interference* ("Social Science Series," 1891), which however falls, in my opinion, into the snare of overstraining the argument at many points against Mr Spencer in a partisan spirit, while other writers, at least equally open to attack, receive from Mr Ritchie remarkably lenient treatment. I have sought to show this in a critique in the *National Reformer*, April 19, May 3 and 10, 1891. No less effective than Mr Ritchie's is the criticism of Mr Lester Ward in his *Dynamic Sociology* (New York, 1883), vol. i. ch. 2.

"The salvation of every society, as of every species, depends on the maintenance of an absolute opposition between the regime of the family and the regime of the State. To survive, every species of creature must fulfil two conflicting requirements. During a certain period each member must receive benefits in proportion to its incapacity. After that period, it must receive benefits in proportion to its capacity. . . . [Mature] individuals gain benefits proportionate to their merits. . . . The strong, the swift, the keen-sighted, the sagacious profit by their respective superiorities. . . . The less capable thrive less, and on the average of cases rear fewer offspring. The least capable disappear by failure to get food or from inability to escape. . . . There is thus, during mature life, a reversal of the principle that ruled during immature life. . . . Clearly with a society, as with a species, survival depends on conformity to both of these antagonist principles. Import into the family the law of the society, and let children from infancy upwards have life-sustaining supplies proportioned to their life-sustaining labours, and the society disappears forthwith by death of all its young. Import into the society the law of the family, *and let the life-sustaining supplies be great in proportion as the life-sustaining labours are small*, and the society decays from increase of its least worthy members and decrease of its most worthy members. It fails to hold its own in the struggle with other societies which allow play to the natural law that prosperity shall vary as efficiency. . . . Unqualified generosity must remain the principle of the family while offspring are passing through their early stages; and generosity, increasingly qualified by justice, must remain its principle as offspring are approaching maturity. Conversely, the principle of the society, guiding the acts of citizens to one another, must ever be justice, qualified by such generosity as their several natures prompt; joined with unqualified justice in the corporate acts of the society to its members. However fitly, in the battle of life among adults, the proportioning of rewards to merits may be tempered by private sympathy in favour of the inferior, nothing but evil can result if this proportioning is so interfered with by public arrangements, that demerit profits at the expense of merit."<sup>1</sup>

The most general of the many fatal objections which lie against this account of social policy is that it has no verifiable relation to the actual social facts. The strangest of all Mr Spencer's oversights is his failure to note that in the individualist society of all ages, since the establishment of written codes of law, the means of subsistence are secured to the unworthy by the system of inheritance. He keeps

<sup>1</sup> § 322 (pp. 707-709).

solemnly repeating that "If any will not work, neither shall he eat" is the law of society; whereas it notoriously is not, in respect of the existence of a whole class living on inherited investments and possessions.<sup>1</sup> Coming to details we note (1) that he himself applauds those laws which curtail on ethical grounds the natural advantages of "the strong, the swift." Then either the principle of such curtailment is bad on biological grounds from the beginning, or it may fitly be applied further as against "the keen-sighted, the sagacious" in the matter of commercial aggrandisement. And if the systematic social interference with mere brute advantage is not found to injure a society in its competition with others, even though such policy preserves many weak individuals who would succumb in a brute struggle, then neither need societies be injured by their resolve to limit the operation of other individual advantages; for, insomuch as laws limiting physical force foster so far mental development, so laws interfering with the free play of the self-serving and self-aggrandising mental faculties may so far foster the higher and more society-serving mental faculties. On the other hand (2) the phrase about "letting the life-sustaining supplies be great *in proportion as* the life-sustaining labours are small" has no just bearing on any social contingency. No theory of politics proposes any such ratio. Even the ideal Socialist formula, "To each one according to his needs; from each one according to his powers," does not square with Mr Spencer's phrase. And the implication that those persons who can do least "life-sustaining labour" are the "least worthy members" of society, is a grotesquely fallacious generalisation. Again, going back (3) to the fundamental contrast set up between the family and the society, we find that it takes no account of one of the most ordinary features of family life, the maintenance of *mature* members by the others in sickness, adversity, and old age. But the oversight is very intelli-

<sup>1</sup>Yet he insists, for sociological purposes, on the dwindling of all disused faculties (*Study of Sociology*, ch. xiv., p. 337).

gible, for Mr Spencer must needs discredit all but the species-maintaining motive in the State, and it furthers his purpose to make similarly little account of all but the species-maintaining considerations in the family. If we are to make light of all the secondary instincts of the society—the instincts of collective compassion, collective justice, collective interest, and collective reason—we may just as well make light of the brotherly and sisterly and filial instincts in the family. It does not appear that the species, as such, would run any risks from the strangling of the aged and the incurably diseased; and on the face of Mr Spencer's argument there is no other ground on which their summary extinction should be forbidden. On the other hand, if the spontaneous play of compassion and the revolt from callous egoism is to be admitted as good in the family, there can be no *a priori* caveat against it in the affairs of the society. Lastly, (4) Mr Spencer's appeal to the instinct of justice as a sanction overruling the instincts of philanthropy and collective rationalism, is a tacit evasion of the all-important fact that the instinct of justice is explicitly involved in the appeal for a collective social policy. Those reformers with whom Mr Spencer is specially at issue are as emphatic on the point of justice as he; and his argument against them resolves itself into this circle:—We must not be led by ideas of justice into maintaining the socially unfit, because to maintain the socially unfit is to jeopardise the species; and to detect the socially unfit all we have to do is to follow strictly the prescriptions of justice.

In fine, Mr Spencer's political conclusions rest upon no historical induction or logical deduction. There is, indeed, a semblance of induction in his reference<sup>1</sup> to the operation of the old English Poor Law, as a sample of the effects of State benevolence, and in his enumeration of repealed Acts of Parliament<sup>2</sup> as an illustration of the fate of measures of benevolent State regulation; but the argument is forced and *ex parte*. We might as well argue—or the out-and-out

<sup>1</sup> *Study of Sociology*, ch. xv.

<sup>2</sup> *Man versus the State*, p. 50.



Anarchists might as well argue against him—that the innumerable miscalculations and miscarriages of early laws framed for purposes of which he approves, serve to discredit all forms of regulation whatever. A great deal of unsound argument on these matters would be spared if it could be realised that, in terms even of the principle of Survival-of-the-fittest, all human ideas and all human actions are but so many activities which, like organisms, compete for existence and survive in respect of adaptation to the special conditions of the case and of the hour. The truth accepted to-day was not “fitted to survive” in the mental climate of a former age: the truth which satisfies the thinker is not “fitted to survive” in the intelligence of his ignorant or foolish contemporary. The same brain, too, may throw out a hundred ideas, of which some that are to other brains demonstrably fallacious will yet be adhered to by their progenitor as fondly as he holds his soundest reasonings: Mr Spencer, like every other thinker, yields instances enough for his critics. On that view, no citation of blunders made by a society in the attempt to realise an ideal can be a conclusive argument against the harbouring of ideals or against new attempts as such; were it only because doing nothing may conceivably be the worst blunder of all. Mr Spencer’s “Administrative Nihilism” is thus but a counterpoising counsel to counsels of action seen to be bad, such as Comte’s. It cannot veto action as such: it can but move to reconsideration of proposed action.

The phrase “Administrative Nihilism,” it will be remembered, came from Professor Huxley, who, himself a good deal of a Nihilist as regarded his personal political action, was moved, after his wont, to challenge the weak negative-side of Mr Spencer’s sociological method, and so reached affirmative conclusions on which he was never much concerned to act. Mr Spencer’s parallel between the vertebrate organism and the “body politic,” he forcibly insisted, clearly led to a positive and not a negative theory of State action.<sup>1</sup> If the legislature is as the brain, its

<sup>1</sup> Essay on *Administrative Nihilism* (1871), in *Collected Essays*, i. 271.

business cannot be to let the legs and arms and lungs and stomach act as it were independently: its business must be to supervise their activities in the common interest. Huxley's own position, however, was that the organic analogy (which is older even than Hobbes' *Leviathan*) is astray; and that the true parallel is between the body politic and the synthesis or compound of the chemist. His argument—which, curiously enough, involves a defence of that theory of the "social contract," which he was later implicitly to deride—here becomes at least as faulty as Mr Spencer's, and leaves out of sight rather more vital facts than are ignored by that; but it holds good so far as it is directly destructive. And as against all arguments which proceed from enumeration of mistakes in State action to denial of the propriety of State action in general, he offers an answer which puts such arguments in their true light:—

"Politics, as a science, is not older than astronomy; but though the subject matter of the latter is vastly less complex than that of the former, the theory of the moon's motions is not quite settled yet."<sup>1</sup>

And no less to the point is his concrete application of the general principle to a special class of cases, made much of by Mr Spencer:—

"The State lives in a glass-house: we see what it tries to do; and all its failures, partial or total, are made the most of. But private enterprise is sheltered under good opaque bricks and mortar. The public rarely know what it tries to do, and only hears of failures when they are gross and patent to all the world. Who is to say how private enterprise would come out if it tried its hand at State work? Those who have had most experience of joint-stock companies and their management, will probably be least inclined to believe in the innate superiority of private enterprise over State management."<sup>2</sup>

On the general sociological issue it may be added that, as Mr Spencer's case against common or State action rests mainly on the fact of the general moral and intellectual imperfection of men, and as his own philosophy leads him to assume that such imperfections are gradually being

<sup>1</sup> *Id. ib.*, p. 280.

<sup>2</sup> *Id. ib.*, p. 260.

lessened, it follows on his own showing that society is becoming gradually fitter to act in common without miscarriage; and if the capacity for the function is there, it would be somewhat strange if it were not exercised. But the great shortcoming of Mr Spencer's as of Darwin's conception of social evolution is that it takes no proper account of the profound difference introduced into the process by the emergence of the general consciousness thereof.

When we come to his "Political Retrospect and Prospect,"<sup>1</sup> and consider it is a crowning deliverance to his age, we get an almost pathetic impression of inadequacy. Though following on the really valuable chapters on the development of Political Institutions, it has no similar value. It might have been written in 1860, so far is it from realising the master-tendency of present day political evolution; though in the separate polemic treatise "*Man versus the State*" he deals with that pointedly enough. The "Prospect" assumes an increasing limitation of State-functions, an increasing relegation of public functions to "private enterprise." Considering that his other writings admit a strenuous effort in most European States to extend the functions of the State, it is hard to surmise the grounds on which this general forecast is made. Where Mr Spencer's special forecasts are avowedly "tentative," as in his suggestion<sup>2</sup> that the highest State-office will continue to decline in importance, they are really much more plausible than this; though his discussion of the future prospects of Second Chambers challenges criticism in turn. While expressly conceding that "unforeseen" political arrangements are "sure" to arise, he sees no prospect of vital alteration here. The explanation of the whole seems to be that, as already suggested, his Sociology is a seriously incomplete process of investigation; and that lack of study of the movement of civilisation, as distinct from the anatomy and archæology of it, has left him imperfectly fitted to reckon with the living forces of change,

<sup>1</sup> *Principles of Sociology*, vol. ii., end.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.*, § 578.

which in these days are taking shape as economic and ethical convictions, reached by and resting on manifold analytic study of society in its most modern phases. It is not sufficient preparation for dealing with these to anatomise and synthesise the earliest societies of all. It is indeed profoundly instructive to trace the likeness between the skeletons of the higher apes and that of man; but the comparison gives small clue to the probabilities or possibilities of human thought.

In the end, Mr Spencer is found to yield only the sociology of his personal bias. He is not an economist, so he sees no room for a revolutionary economic criticism of competitive industrial society. He does not want to see more but less legislation, so he thinks society will adhere to Second Chambers, which check legislation. He does not want to see the sources of wealth socialised—this ostensibly because he fears the power of the State to tyrannise—so he thinks society will relegate as many forms of public undertaking as possible to joint-stock companies. The forecast may be right or may be wrong; but it has no claim to rank as a part of Sociology. It ignores too many facts and forces to have the status of a scientific generalisation.

It is right to note, however, that the political conclusion on which Mr Spencer lays the greatest stress of all is one which really coincides with the teaching of all history as well as with the highest civilised feeling, and that is, that the possibility of a high social state, political as well as general, fundamentally depends on the cessation of war.<sup>1</sup> It is a sufficient ethical vindication of a system of thought, which from first to last steadily denies alike the truth and the efficacy of theological systems of morals, that it thus puts its whole practical influence on the inculcation of peace on earth.

<sup>1</sup> *Ib.*, § 582.

§ 4. *Sir Henry Maine.*

Perhaps no writer on social science has been better praised in the last generation than the author of "Ancient Law." One of his most competent critics has admitted that that work "for more than twenty years has profoundly influenced the whole teaching of jurisprudence in our country";<sup>1</sup> and on the general ground of political science we find the late Professor Huxley, while confusedly lamenting that the book "seems to be forgotten or wilfully ignored by the ruck of political speculators," at the same time representing that at the moment of his speaking it has had "twenty-nine years of *growing* influence on thoughtful men,"<sup>2</sup> and speaking of it with unqualified admiration. And Maine's influence, as we have seen, is sometimes pointed to as a case of fit and due scientific success, as against the alleged scientific unsuccess of Buckle. The claim is worth examining.

On a first view, it is not hard to see how Maine appealed to his generation. For one thing, his style, though of no remarkable beauty or power, has a certain classic dignity and weight, and a general chastity, which readily win respect and suggest judicial wisdom. It is not that he is really steadfast or dispassionate; he is in reality far otherwise: but he had mastered the English art of "good form." And beyond this he had a just attraction for the students of law in that, where its teachers had hitherto given it in general an air of arid arbitrariness, even when they lent it the saving grace of a coherent method, he seemed to make it at once organic and interesting by tracing its roots and its growth through the soil of historic conditions, which themselves in turn seemed thus to grow newly intelligible. As readable as Blackstone, he was scholarly and ostensibly exact where Blackstone was loose, pre-scientific, and rhetorical. In his hands, unquestionably, the study of law

<sup>1</sup> D. McLennan, *The Patriarchal Theory*, 1885, pref. p. x.

<sup>2</sup> Essay "On the Natural Inequality of Men" (1890): *Collected Essays*, i. 292, *note*.

becomes newly instructive, though it had just before been in such hands as those of Bentham and Austin.<sup>1</sup>

And yet, on the other hand, it can be shown that he fell far short of loyalty to the scientific method he professed to apply; that his whole work proceeds on a pre-scientific sociological hypothesis, held by him at bottom as a prejudice; that he entirely fails to supply any such general explanation of social movement as is vaguely credited to him by his admirers; and that his teaching even so far as it goes is riddled with contradictions. Like some other distinguished Englishmen of his day, he covered an inconsistent series of prepossessions and mock inductions with a mask of argument and system. Constant in his predilections, he was intellectually vacillating, because constitutionally illogical.

I. His credit as a systematic sociologist, it is plain, must in large part stand or fall with his proposition that the Patriarchal state, the family, is the earliest form of human society; and that the State grew by agglutination of Families into Houses or *gentes*, of Houses into Tribes, and of Tribes into the Common-wealth.<sup>2</sup> On this thesis, at least as regards the primordial character of the Family, he chose to stake all as against those political theorists whom all his life he was bent on controverting. He professedly handled Ancient Law in "its connection with the early history of society and its relation to modern ideas"; and he insisted that "we ought to commence with the simplest social forms in a state as near as possible to their rudimen-

<sup>1</sup> The former disregard of Roman law by English jurists, so strongly complained of by Maine, is curiously illustrated by a writer who long before him sought to introduce the study. Spence, the author of *An Inquiry into the Origin of the Laws and Political Institutions of Modern Europe* (1826), tells in his preface how, having been engaged in a translation of the Code Napoléon, he "was induced in consequence to look attentively into the civil law of the Romans, where he found that a great proportion of the doctrines of the common law of England, even many of those which are purely artificial, were to be found in the Institutes, the Pandects, the Code, and the Novels." Yet he was already a practising Chancery barrister when he made the discovery. His performance is none the less a creditable one.

<sup>2</sup> *Ancient Law*, 9th ed., p. 128.

tary condition."<sup>1</sup> This rudimentary condition he avowedly found in the Family as conceived in the simplest form of the Patriarchal Theory<sup>2</sup>; and the determining evidence for that theory he avowedly found in the Hebrew Scriptures. Repelling the reasoning of the French publicists of last century as to the "Social Contract," he affirmed that the study which "would best have corrected" their misapprehensions was "the study of religion," that is Judaism. "*There was but one body of primitive records which was worth studying*—the early history of the Jews. But resort to this was prevented by the prejudices of the time."<sup>3</sup>

The first question that arises on this extraordinary assertion is: How could Maine suppose the average French publicists of that day to be ignorant of the patriarchal tales? and the second is, How could the most familiar acquaintance with these records have prevented the development of the ideas popularised by Rousseau? It does not seem to have occurred to Maine that Bossuet's *Histoire Universelle* was then a familiar classic, and that in that work the Scripture history is made the basis of all; nor does he seem even to have known of the existence of Goguet's elaborate treatise *De l'Origine des Lois, des Arts, et des Sciences* (1758), which systematically starts from the Hebrew records, and expressly lays down Maine's own doctrine of the primordial Patria Potestas, citing Judah and Tamar in the established fashion. It was a learned and a readable work: it was speedily translated into English<sup>4</sup> and German; and it was more than once reprinted even in the early years of the present century. Thus the possible advantage to sociology of a study of the Pentateuch had been so far realised; and for the rest, it is a strange supposition that the Abbé Mably,—who was at least as much of an innovator as Rousseau, outgoing him on some points,<sup>5</sup> and who was distinctly hostile to the new

<sup>1</sup> P. 115.

<sup>2</sup> P. 122.

<sup>3</sup> Pp. 89-90.

<sup>4</sup> At Edinburgh, [by Henry?] 1761.

<sup>5</sup> Villemain, *Tableau du XVIIIe Siècle*, 1838, ii., 189, 501. Mr H. J. Tozer in his recent edition of the *Social Contract* notes that Rousseau drew his ideas from Hobbes, Locke, Macchiavelli, Bodin, Grotius, Pufendorf, Althusius,

school of philosophy—was unacquainted alike with the Pentateuch and Bossuet.

It is hard to understand, again, how Maine could reason as he does in the face of the fact that the Hebrew records, and the doctrine of the *Patria Potestas*, were alike in the hands of men of both sides in the two English revolutions. It does not occur to him to note that Milton, a hundred years before Rousseau, repeated the ancient formula that all men are born free;<sup>1</sup> and that Hooker, still earlier, affirmed the principles of the Social Contract and of the Law of Nature with equal emphasis.<sup>2</sup> But he does note<sup>3</sup> that Locke on one side of the English constitutional dispute, and Hobbes on the other, with their quite opposite political bents, alike made the "fundamental assumption of a non-historic, unverifiable condition of the race." Thus the same theoretic assumption and the same Biblical training could underlie the Great Rebellion in England, the reaction against that Rebellion, the later royalist teaching of Filmer, and the rejoinders of Sidney and Locke to that. And yet the past generation has docilely accepted from Maine the proposition that study of the Pentateuch would have saved the French publicists from accepting the theory of Natural Right, and, by consequence, would have saved France from the Revolution.

The truth is that Maine's idea of the Revolution, and indeed of all political movement, was all along pre-scientific. This is perhaps not very severe blame, comparatively speaking, when we remember how Mr Morley again and

Algernon Sidney, Fénelon, D'Argenson, Abbé de Saint-Pierre, Voltaire, Mably and Morelly. To these names may be added those of Mariana, Buffier, Gyraldi, and Etienne de la Boétie, given in *Les Plagiats de J. J. Rousseau* (1766), and that of Mandeville, noted by Adam Smith in his *Letter to the Authors of the Edinburgh Review* (1755). It will hardly be pretended that these writers in general had missed the educating influence of the Pentateuch.

<sup>1</sup> *Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*, 1649. Similarly the *Parliamentary Declaration* of 1648 confidently affirms the Social Contract.

<sup>2</sup> *Ecclesiastical Polity*, B. I. § viii. § x. Hooker of course found the principle of the Social Contract ready made in Aristotle (*Politics*, B. iii., ch. 9, citing Lycophron), like that of the Law of Nature.

<sup>3</sup> *Ancient Law*, p. 114.



again forgets his own propositions as to the causation of the Revolution, and credits the "Philosophers" with bringing about the catastrophe. But there is a special stress of error in Maine's characteristic proposition<sup>1</sup> that in antiquity the functions of the theory of Natural Law "were in short remedial, not revolutionary or anarchical. And this, unfortunately, is the exact point at which the modern view of a Law of Nature has often ceased to resemble the ancient." This remark is approvingly cited by Huxley. It is nevertheless as superficial a saying as is to be found in the literature of the subject. The implication is that the moderns have by reason of unwisdom fallen into an error which the ancients were wise enough to avoid. The least analysis makes it clear, however, that the determining difference, in practice, lay in the entirely different stress of modern political grievances, relatively to modern life and thought; and that it was not Rousseau's writing which taught men to feel anarchically or revolutionarily about the Law of Nature, but the malfaisance of the French government which made a hotbed for Rousseau's seed. Further, as we shall see, Maine actually commits himself—forgetfully, of course, and for another purpose—to the assertion that the theory of Natural Law *did* lead the ancient Greeks too far, and tended to make them "revolutionary and anarchical." On the other hand, it never seems to have occurred to him to ask whether even the French Revolution was not a healthier and hopefuller phenomenon than that total collapse of "remedial" power which, as he again unthinkingly shows, soon came upon even the Roman doctrine of Jus Naturale. On these matters he had not the semblance of a consistent philosophy.

But we have not yet done with his attitude on the Hebrew records. After the passage above cited, he goes on:

"One of the few characteristics which the school of Rousseau had in common with the school of Voltaire was an utter disdain of all

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<sup>1</sup> P. 77.

religious antiquities ; and, more than all, of those of the Hebrew race. It is well known that it was a point of honour with the reasoners of that day to assume not merely that the institutions called after Moses were not divinely dictated, nor even that they were codified at a later date than that attributed to them, but that they and the entire Pentateuch were a gratuitous forgery, executed after the return from the Captivity. Debarred, therefore, *from one chief security against speculative delusion*, the philosophers of France, in their eagerness to escape what they deemed a superstition of the priests, flung themselves into a superstition of the lawyers."

Maine here only contrives to show how much further astray an English lawyer could be in 1860, relatively to his lights, than Rousseau and "the philosophers of France" in 1760. The account he gives of their view of the Pentateuch, though it greatly exaggerates the length to which rational analysis had then gone,<sup>1</sup> really constitutes a good rough statement of the now ascertained facts. The Pentateuch *is* in large measure a gratuitous Post-Exilic forgery ; and those portions of it on which Maine chose to stake his sociological system are now known to be hopelessly un-historic. The semi-scientific experts who have worked most at these matters have not yet, indeed, learned to recognise in the bulk of Hebrew "history" down to Solomon, and in such narratives as those of Elijah and Elisha, a mere redaction of a mass of myths which the priesthood desired to subordinate to the Yahwist cult ; but even Kuenen expressly admits that nations do not arise and cannot have arisen in the fashion in which in Genesis the Hebrews are said to have descended from the Patriarch.<sup>2</sup> Writing before 1869, he declared that the Hebrew theory of the origin of nations is one "which the historical science of the present day rejects without hesitation." But Maine never learned to hesitate on the subject : and he has seriously passed on the puerile primitive conception to thousands of "educated" readers. His "Ancient

<sup>1</sup> Even the iconoclastic Volney, in his *Recherches Nouvelles sur l'Histoire Ancienne*, written so late as 1814, while insisting that Moses could not have compiled the Pentateuch, expressly suggests that Hilkiyah actually found copies of some real writings by Moses (ch. viii.).

<sup>2</sup> *Religion of Israel*, Eng. trans., i., 110.

Law" appeared in 1861. In 1862 appeared Colenso's first volume on the Pentateuch, which had the effect of opening the eyes of Kuenen and other specialists to the utter absurdity of much of the Pentateuchal matter which they had been accepting as firm historic ground.<sup>1</sup> Yet Colenso did but work out theses and principles of criticism laid down last century by Voltaire, over whom Maine felt himself to have such advantages.

This unreasoning acceptance of Biblical authority, of course, went far to secure for Maine his popularity. Here was a scientific lawyer who subscribed to Moses and Genesis in the name of historical science, and repudiated the rationalists of the past as believing on the contrary in a "non-historic" condition of society.<sup>2</sup> His book was the very thing for the English universities; which were thus enabled to represent the crassest orthodoxy as made good by the "Historical Method." As a matter of fact, the very beliefs which Maine described as a "chief security against speculative delusion" had been held by English and French lawyers in connection with all manner of speculative delusions. His statement that the theory of a "state of nature" is "no doubt the parent, more or less remote, of almost all the prepossessions which impede the employment of the Historical Method of Inquiry,"<sup>3</sup> is an extreme perversion of culture-history. In his own age and country the great hindrance to the employment of that method has been precisely the prepossession of belief in those Hebrew documents to which he himself so uncritically resorted. But it was natural that he should not see this, since his own political prepossession disabled him from applying the Historical Method even to those documents as they stand.

For, all the while, the Hebrew records, unhistorical and incredible as they are, do not even bear out his account of Hebrew patriarchalism; and for the rest, his doctrine is generally rebutted by the very data on which he professed to found it. He had not even assimilated Locke's refuta-

<sup>1</sup> See Kuenen's *Hexateuch*, Eng. tr., Introd. p. xv.    <sup>2</sup> P. 91.    <sup>3</sup> P. 89.

tion of Filmer's pretence of finding the idea of *Patria Potestas* in the histories of Jacob and Judah; and D. McLennan has shown the hiatus between the Hebrew records<sup>1</sup> and the principle of "Ancient Law" as decisively as he has shown, on the basis of his brother's masterly work, that the Patriarchal state was neither primordial nor universal, but late and uncommon. This demonstration is perhaps the most conclusive that has been achieved on any moot problem of anthropology: it was unanswered by Maine, and, taken with the positive proofs of the matriarchate, it is as a whole unanswerable.<sup>2</sup> Save for a few doubtful expressions in his later books, noted by his critic, Maine never profited one jot from all the accumulated evidence which goes to show that the patriarchate is but one of many norms of early society, that it arises relatively late in time, and that the primordial society is utterly different from the patriarchal. Thus he was as recalcitrant to the true Historical or Comparative Method as any of the theorists he assailed. Had he been searching for light instead of seeking proofs for a foregone conclusion, he would have found the case for the matriarchate put by at

<sup>1</sup> Work cited, pp. 35-40.

<sup>2</sup> I take this opportunity to protest against the account given by Starcke of D. McLennan's *Patriarchal Theory*. He writes that "It cannot be denied that this last work of McLennan's is characterised throughout by an embittered tone, and a petty and contradictory spirit which makes a painful impression on the reader" (*The Primitive Family*, Eng. tr. p. 145, note). Starcke here confounds J. F. and D. McLennan; and in his List of Authors he carelessly ascribes both the *Studies in Ancient History* and the *Patriarchal Theory* to the latter, who in the second book avowedly worked up and added to material left by his brother, the sole author of the *Studies*. And the criticism is as unjust as the ascription is inaccurate. The charge of needless contradictoriness might much more justly be made against Dr Starcke himself. There is not a trace of embitterment in *The Patriarchal Theory*. It is a cool and dispassionate, almost a frigid, process of argument and proof, though the author worked under a burden of bad health, and had seen his gifted brother die with his work unfinished, and his fame overshadowed by that of Maine. For instance, in the brilliant treatise of M. André Lefevre on *La Renaissance du Matérialisme* (1881, p. 471), there is a sentence referring to modern scientific discoveries, the Darwinian hypothesis, and "the researches of Maine, Bachofen, Lubbock, on social institutions." McLennan's name ought clearly to have been substituted here for Maine's.

least three writers<sup>1</sup> in that eighteenth century which he was always criticising for its lack of inductive method. He must needs take Rousseau as the type of all its thinking; though Rousseau was answered and counteracted by many writers in his own day. No one would ever learn from Maine that even so famous a writer as Hume had put the case for political "equality" with coolness and cogency<sup>2</sup> where Rousseau put it stormily and recklessly; or that such scientific works as those of Smith and the French economists were produced even in the atmosphere of *a priori* thinking about society, and without the least resort to his cherished Pentateuch, that "chief security against speculative delusion," which, as it happened, was of plenary authority for exactly those schools and orders who resisted the first steps of political as of every other science. And, finally, no one could ever learn from Maine that the efficient cause of the French Revolution was the age-long misgovernment of those who took the Patriarchist view of the State and society. This is the crucial test of his whole propaganda. He put upon Rousseau and the miscalculating democrats the whole burden of a catastrophe which had been preparing for a hundred years at the hands of aristo-

<sup>1</sup> See above, introd., p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> *E.g.*, "A too great disproportion among the citizens weakens any State. Every person, if possible, ought to enjoy the fruits of his labour in a full possession of all the necessities, and many of the conveniences of life. No one can doubt but such an equality is most suitable to human nature, and diminishes much less from the happiness of the rich than it adds to that of the poor. It also augments the power of the State, and makes any extraordinary taxes or impositions be paid with more cheerfulness. . . . The poverty of the common people is a natural if not an infallible effect of absolute monarchy; though I doubt whether it be always true on the other hand that their riches are an infallible effect of liberty. *Liberty must be attended with particular accidents and a certain turn of thinking, in order to produce that effect*" (Essay *Of Commerce*). It is only where Hume serves him for anti-democratic purposes that Maine gives heed to his reasonings (*i.e.* in his late essays on *Popular Government*). In the first sentence of Hume's essay *Of Polygamy and Divorces*, by the way, Maine might have found a wise caveat against his one-ideal treatment of primitive society:—"As marriage is an engagement entered into by mutual consent, and has for its end the propagation of the species, it is evident that it must be susceptible of all the variety of conditions which consent establishes, provided they be not contrary to this end."

crats and would-be autocrats. A true man of science, bent on sociological truth, will lay his finger on all forms of error in thought and practice, and will reprobate all proportionally if he reprobate any. But the only forms of fallacy or miscalculation in politics that disturbed Maine were the democratic forms. It was with him as with the priest who "abandoned the errors of the Church of Rome and embraced those of the Church of England."

On the broad question of his professed sociological foundation, it is no defence of Maine to argue, as is done by Starcke,<sup>1</sup> that he "understands by the primitive Aryan community only the one of which the type is found in the earliest collections of laws." This is a mere evasion of the fact that he claimed to be going to actual and primordial historic data by way of refuting the political theorists who subsumed a primitive state of Nature in which men were equal; and that he connected his whole political philosophy with his thesis of the development of all governments from the *Patria Potestas*. The fact is that he had reverted to typical seventeenth century methods in his recoil from some of the methods of the eighteenth. And it now turns out that the eighteenth century men, with their avowedly abstract theory of a state of Nature, which even Rousseau admits<sup>2</sup> may never have existed, were nearer the truth than Maine in their working conception. Erroneous as their conception was, if taken literally, it was nearer the historic fact of the primeval human horde than Maine's sophisticated idea of an early Patriarchal Family, of which he could find a valid working illustration only in the legalising and patri-

*Primitive Family*, p. 95.

<sup>2</sup> "It is not a light enterprise to . . . know aright a state which no longer exists, which has perhaps never existed, which probably never will exist, and of which it is yet necessary to have just notions, *in order to judge rightly our present state*" (*Discours sur l'Inégalité*, préface). This passage and the context show, what is so constantly missed by modern Rousseau-smashers, that Rousseau was avowedly seeking for an ideal of social justice wherewith to correct the prejudiced assumptions of the rival schools. He actually found the idea of a "law of nature" appropriated to the interests of reigning classes, and of contradictory systems; and he simply gave a fresh application to the old presupposition.

cian polity of Rome. In fine, he adhered obstinately to a prejudice in the teeth of the whole drift of modern biology and anthropology. And it is significant of the capacity for justice of some of Buckle's critics that while they make it a fault in him not to have anticipated Darwin in matters non-sociological, they pass no censure on Maine, who, publishing his work after those of Darwin (on "Species") and Buckle, and in the same year with that of Bachofen on the Matriarchate, made no later modifications of his doctrine in the light of theirs.<sup>1</sup> To this day his leading work is used as a text book in the colleges, with all its original imperfections on its head; and men of science like Huxley, finding it so convenient for their political purposes, say not a word in criticism of its grotesque anthropology.

II. Not only does Maine rest all sociology on an exploded dogma deriving from ignorant Semitic antiquity: he fails, save in respect of separate elucidations of phases of legal development, to throw any general light on that movement of society with which all the while he claims to be dealing. In his leading work he helplessly avows that "The difference between the stationary and progressive societies is one of the great secrets which society has yet to penetrate."<sup>2</sup> But this very theme had been made a special study in the eighteenth century, and many true conclusions lay ready to his hand in Montesquieu and Hume,<sup>3</sup> to mention no others. He had himself, at times, a glimpse of the conditions of progress in a civilisation, as when he writes that "the most superficial student of

<sup>1</sup> In the preface to the fifth (1871) and later editions of *Ancient Law* he avows a change of view on the "difficult and still obscure subjects of the origin of Customary Law," but on that only. He refers for "part of the necessary corrections and modifications" to his *Village Communities*. In his *Lectures on the Early History of Institutions* (1875, p. 307) he confusedly writes that the Roman and Hindu codes "both assume at their starting-point the existence of the institution, by no means apparently universal among savage men, out of which, as I said, all civilisation has grown." Here the admission is so worded as to imply that it has no effect on the author's main doctrine.

<sup>2</sup> *Ancient Law*, p. 23.

<sup>3</sup> *Essay Of the Rise and Progress of the Arts and Sciences*.

Roman history must be struck by the extraordinary degree in which the fortunes of the republic were affected by the presence of foreigners, under different names, on her soil.”<sup>1</sup> But he seemed to shrink from all eighteenth century reasoning in the fashion in which he described the reasoners as shrinking from the Hebrew records; and he never proceeded from glimpses to general views of the laws of social progress. He was, when all is said, a lawyer. And he cannot be excused for taking a mere lawyer's view of things on the score that he was a lawyer dealing with law, for he expressly insisted that law covered the whole field of human affairs,<sup>2</sup> and that legal knowledge was the best guide to the comprehension of history.<sup>3</sup> It was of the investigation of the mysterious “difference between the stationary and progressive societies” that he said that an “indispensable condition of success is an accurate knowledge of Roman law in all its principal stages,” the study which he again pronounced “the most plentiful source of the stream of modern knowledge.” And, challenging for once<sup>4</sup> an orthodox delusion—the view that “from the close of the Augustan era to the general awakening of interest on the points of the Christian faith, the mental energies of the civilised world were smitten with a paralysis”—he gives this account of the status of jurisprudence in the realm of mental science :—

“Now there are two subjects of thought—the only two, perhaps, with the exception of physical science—which are able to give employment to all the powers and capacities which the mind possesses. One of them is metaphysical inquiry, which knows no limits so long as the mind is satisfied to work on itself; *the other is Law, which is as extensive as the concerns of mankind.*”

This means, if anything, that Law involves history, economics, and politics; and that “ancient law” covers all the main problems of sociology. So that sociology, on Maine's fullest conception of it, left social evolution unexplained, save by the circular theorem that the laws of a community are the motive forces in its evolution. The Hindoos and

<sup>1</sup> Work cited, p. 46.

<sup>2</sup> P. 360.

<sup>3</sup> Pp. 24, 342.

<sup>4</sup> P. 359.



the Romans, he notes,<sup>1</sup> "sprang from the same original stock," but one people progressed socially where the other failed. Hindu jurisprudence has developed "an immense apparatus of cruel absurdities. From these corruptions the Romans *were protected by their code.*" Thus the real problem is entirely evaded. We want to know how the Romans came to develop their better code; and we are told simply that they got on better because their code was better.<sup>2</sup> Such is the sociology that passes current in our universities in the generation which has pronounced Buckle unscientific; such the manipulation of the "Historical Method" by a jurist who professes to trace the causation of law in history.

III. All this, of course, might very well pass muster with such students as our educational system provides for such teachers, and with publicists like Huxley, too intent on the dialectics of the forum to feel the need for a really philosophic view of politics. Our students are as a rule so helplessly given over to degree-hunting as a means to a livelihood, that an orthodox text-book need fear as little from their scrutiny as from that of their supervisors; and our Liberal politicians of these days are sadly little given to political philosophy. But it remains surprising that a manual bearing on the study of law, which is supposed to breed at least exact attention to consistency of detail, should commit such a multitude of self-contradictions as does Maine's with apparently complete impunity. Let his positive fundamental fallacy and his negative fallacy be alike let pass, and he is still found absolutely chaotic in the statement of what general views he has. Let us take

(a) His generalisations as to progressive and stationary communities.

"It is indisputable that much the greatest part of mankind has never shown a particle of desire that its civil institutions should be

<sup>1</sup> P. 20.

<sup>2</sup> A proximate explanation is incidentally suggested later (see below, p. 410), but it is given without any reference to the original problem.

improved since the moment when external completeness was first given to them by their embodiment in some permanent record. . . . Except in a small section of the world, there has been nothing like the gradual amelioration of a legal system."<sup>1</sup>

That is to say, very few societies improve their laws *after* they have been codified. But we are told in the same book, just as emphatically, that very little progress is made in the stage *before* codification. "If the customs and institutions of barbarians have one characteristic more striking than another, it is their extreme uniformity."<sup>2</sup> It is thus a mere mystery how so many societies have got the length of codes; for of those who have, Maine sets aside the great majority as "stationary." "I confine myself in what follows," he writes, "to the progressive societies;"<sup>3</sup> and he has expressly dismissed India and China as unprogressive. Yet the very characterisation shows that there is neither continuous progress nor permanent stagnation anywhere.

"We can see that Brahminical India has not passed beyond a stage which occurs in the history of all the families of mankind, the stage at which a rule of law is not discriminated from a rule of religion. . . . In China this point has been passed, but progress seems to have been there arrested, because the civil laws are coextensive with all the ideas of which the race is capable."<sup>4</sup>

Unprogressive China, then, has progressed further than Brahminical India. And yet we had been previously told<sup>5</sup> that the Code of Manu "is, in point of the relative progress of Hindu jurisprudence, a recent production." We are left, then, to the case of "progressive" Rome. And here in turn we find that whereas the idea of Equity was the expanding power in Roman law, "in the reign of Alexander Severus the power of growth in Roman Equity seems to be exhausted, and the succession of jurisconsults comes to a close."<sup>6</sup> Thus Rome also is only progressive up to a certain point; so that the distinction between the "stationary and progressive races" falls to the ground. The very feature which is to mark India as backward is a common

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 22-23.    <sup>2</sup> P. 366.    <sup>3</sup> P. 24.    <sup>4</sup> P. 23.    <sup>5</sup> P. 18.    <sup>6</sup> Pp. 68, 69.

feature in legal doctrine in England in our own day.<sup>1</sup> There is no "stationary race," and no "progressive race." All races do or may progress under certain conditions, and stagnate under certain conditions. And Maine seems to have no notion of what the determining conditions are—contact of cultures and love of knowledge making for progress: cessation of such contact, with ingrained disrelish of knowledge, making for stagnation.<sup>2</sup> Doubtless his habit of religious conformity would preclude his telling Christians that the disdain of "human" knowledge spread by their creed in antiquity was a main factor in the ruin of civilisation; but even he, it might be thought, could have ventured, if he saw it, on the broad generalisa-

<sup>1</sup> The present Lord Chancellor, Lord Halsbury, when Attorney-General, laid it down in the House of Commons "without fear of contradiction" that "Christianity is part of the common law of England"—this in contravention of a contrary dictum of Lord Chief Justice Coleridge. See the *Life of Bradlaugh*, ii. 337.

<sup>2</sup> In his later Lectures on the *Early History of Institutions*, making a "return upon himself" which suggests how much his reflective powers were in general hampered by his partisanship, he makes the notable admission:—"I do not, indeed, deny that the difference between the East and the West, in respect of the different speed at which new ideas are produced, is only a difference of degree. There were new ideas produced in India, even during the disastrous period just before the English entered it, and in the earlier ages this production must have been rapid. There must have been a series of ages during which the progress of China was very steadily maintained; and doubtless our assumption of the absolute immobility of the Chinese and other societies is in part the expression of our ignorance" (pp. 226-227). Thus China and India are added to the States in which there has been great and long-continued progress. But no correction is made of the previous insistence on the unprogressiveness of the great mass of mankind; and this very passage, which so distinctly concedes the commonness of the phenomena of progress even in the East, is reprinted by Maine without comment in his latest volume (*Popular Government*, p. 192) as a note to his essay entitled "The Age of Progress," in which he had requoted and reaffirmed (pp. 22-23) the early assertions above cited from *Ancient Law*, and further baldly affirmed (pp. 132-133) that the enormous mass of the Chinese and Indian populations, and of the Moslem world, is intensely opposed to change of any kind. It thus appears that to the last Maine never succeeded in harmonising his ideas and observations. He was too much bent on gratifying his predilections of temperament and sympathy to note dispassionately the conditions of relative progress in nations. He always fell back on his pet thesis that democracies are naturally unprogressive, thus ending in a theory of his own about the "state of nature," as unscientific as any he assailed.

tion that when the Roman Empire set up one Oriental cult as a rule of life and thought through its whole extent, it was so far making an end of the conditions of progress ; even as Brahminism and Mandarinism have in large measure done for the isolated cultures of India and China.

(b) The self-contradiction becomes still sharper, for an obvious reason, when Maine has to deal with the spirit of conscious reform. As a civilised Englishman, he must needs approve of progress, the more so as he was always insisting that progress occurred only in a small section of the human race. But, on the other hand, it was the aspiration for progress that specially clashed with his political bias ; and he was as a systematic teacher perpetually shifting from one to the other of two opposed positions, one being : "Progress (which is a good thing) is the exception and not the rule among mankind ;" while the other was : "Beware of the desire for progress." How deep was the inner contradiction can only be realised by a special scrutiny of his chapters on "Law of Natural Equity" and "The Modern History of the Law of Nature."

We have seen that he insisted on the unprogressiveness of nearly all races after they had codified their laws. But in the act of insisting on that, he was anxious to insist on his other point that changes in laws after the Code stage is reached are 'deliberative, whereas previous changes (which on his own showing were also few and far between) had been "spontaneous." And his master bias was that set up in studious latter-day Conservatives by Burke—a confused aversion to all ratiocinative change, as supposed to be distinguished from "natural" or semi-conscious change. Accordingly he was committed to discrediting the spirit of reform while pointing to the act of reform as the mark of superiority in a civilisation. The result is a grotesque tissue of contradictions. Thus, after the dictum that most societies have no desire whatever for reform, and make no legal progress, we have this :

"There are *two special dangers* to which law, and society which is held together by law, appear to be liable *in their infancy*. One of

them is that law *may be too rapidly developed*. . . . The *other liability* to which the infancy of society is exposed has prevented or arrested the progress of far the greater part of mankind. The *rigidity of positive law* . . . has chained down the mass of the human race. . . ."<sup>1</sup>

The correlative positions now are : (1) Almost no societies progress in the barbaric stage ; (2) almost no societies progress after reaching the stage of Code Law ; (3) *all* societies are subject *in infancy* to *two special dangers*, one of which is, *going too fast*, the other, *not going at all*. (4) These dangers being special to "infancy," they are not to be conceived as affecting the later stage of civilisation, though that is the stage in which, in the terms of the case, the trouble of "not going at all" is declared to arise.

If this process of self-stultification can be matched in current sociology it is only, I think, in Maine's further handling of the special cases of Greece and Rome. His use of the term "infancy" is entirely unintelligible in the light of the context, for the only case he deals with is that of late Republican Greece. It is immediately after the first reference to "infancy," and the specification of the infantile risk "that law may be too rapid," that he writes :

"This occurred with the codes of the *more progressive* Greek communities, which disembarassed themselves with astonishing facility from cumbrous forms of procedure and needless terms of art, and soon ceased to attach any superstitious value to rigid rules and prescriptions. *It was not for the ultimate advantage of mankind that they did so*, though the immediate benefit conferred on their citizens may have been considerable. One of the rarest qualities of national character is the capacity for applying and working out the law, as such, at the cost of constant (!) miscarriages of abstract justice, without at the same time losing the hope or the wish that law may be conformed to a higher ideal. The Greek intellect, with all its mobility and elasticity, was quite unable to confine itself within the strait waistcoat of a legal formula ; and, if we may judge them by the popular courts of Athens, of whose working we possess accurate knowledge, the Greek tribunals exhibited the strongest tendency to confound law and fact. The remains of the orators, and the forensic commonplaces preserved by Aristotle in his Treatise on Rhetoric,

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<sup>1</sup> Pp. 75-77.

show that questions of pure law were constantly argued on every consideration which could possibly influence the mind of the judges. *No durable system of jurisprudence could be produced in this way.* A community which never hesitated to relax rules of written law whenever they stood in the way of an ideally perfect decision on the facts of particular cases, would only, if it bequeathed any body of judicial principles to posterity, bequeath one consisting of the ideas of right and wrong which happened to be prevalent at the time. Such a jurisprudence would contain *no framework to which the more advanced conceptions of subsequent ages could be fitted.* It would amount at best to a *philosophy, marked with the imperfections of the civilisation under which it grew up.*"

The last two sentences, by their utter perversity, almost relieve us of the task of criticism. If there be any meaning in words, a legal "framework" (which by implication is a "*durable system of jurisprudence*") is above all things bound to be "marked with the imperfections of the civilisation under which it grew up;" while a "philosophy" may really inspire and evoke the mental activity of an age subsequent to that of its formation. But the final and sufficient answer to the whole piece of obscurantist sophistry is to be had by simply collating it with other assertions in the same chapter and in the one preceding. Following the account there given of the evolution of Roman law, we get these details:

1. By reason of their contacts with non-Roman populations, the Roman jurists arrived at a system of *Jus Gentium*, or broad general law common to various peoples,<sup>1</sup> as distinct from the Civil Law of Rome.

2. On this conception there later followed the idea of a *Jus Naturale*, or Law of Nature. This was identified by the Justinian legists with the *Jus Gentium* or Law of Nations: "that which natural reason appoints for all mankind is called the Law of Nations, because all nations use it."<sup>2</sup> In the words of Maine: "the *Jus Naturale*, or Law of Nature, is simply the *Jus Gentium*, or Law of Nations, *seen in the light of a peculiar theory.*"<sup>3</sup>

3. But this last definition is stultified by two subsequent

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 49, 50.

<sup>2</sup> P. 46.

<sup>3</sup> P. 52.

admissions: First, that the Greek Stoics greatly influenced Roman jurisprudence by lending it the "single fundamental assumption" of the Law of Nature;<sup>1</sup> and that it was this idea which above all things developed Roman jurisprudence. "*The progress of the Romans in legal improvement was astonishingly rapid as soon as stimulus was applied to it by the theory of Natural Law.*"<sup>2</sup> Again: I know no reason why the law of the Romans should be superior to the laws of the Hindoos, unless the theory of Natural Law had given it a type of excellence different from the usual one."<sup>3</sup> Then the *Jus Naturale* was *not* "simply the *Jus Gentium* seen in the light of a peculiar theory": it was an ethical principle corrective of *Jus Gentium*, which at many points it overrode.<sup>4</sup> And the "seen-in-the-light-of" formula is further stultified by the specific dictum: "What was the exact *point of contact* between the old *Jus Gentium* and the Law of Nature? I think that *they touch and blend* through *Æquitas*, or Equity in its original sense."<sup>5</sup>

It will now be seen that besides stultifying himself in a series of mutually exclusive formulas, Maine has completely stultified his argument against the Greeks for developing their law too fast. He had laid it down that though they may have benefited themselves, they did not benefit mankind. It now appears on his own showing that it was the Greeks who, by their idea of Natural Right, lent to Rome the one great stimulus which produced an "astonishingly rapid" (but yet not too rapid) legal improvement, up to the point at which legal improvement ceased. And as Maine is constantly claiming that the Roman system of law is the great service rendered by Rome to civilisation, it comes out that the Greeks are on that score the true benefactors of the modern world. Finally, as the developed Roman jurisprudence has alone, in the terms of the case,

<sup>1</sup> P. 56.

<sup>2</sup> P. 57.

<sup>3</sup> P. 78.

<sup>4</sup> As a matter of fact, slavery was defined in the Institutes of Justinian as "an institution of the Law of Nations by which one man is subjected to the dominion of another, *contrary to Nature*" (*Lib. I., Tit. iii. § 2*).

<sup>5</sup> P. 58.

had anything like "permanence," it turns out that the way of thought which could yield "no durable system of jurisprudence" is precisely that which, on the sophist's own testimony, was the determining factor in producing the most durable system of jurisprudence the world has known! In his own later words,<sup>1</sup> "the Law of Nature [as developed in France last century] . . . gave the most exalted place to *lucidity, simplicity, and system*"; and he implicitly admits<sup>2</sup> that the Code Napoléon, which has proved tolerably durable, and has served as a model for an ever-increasing number of Codes, was historically the outcome of the modern juristic application of the idea of the Law of Nature. And finally, he admits that Bentham did a great work, and that his immense success was due to his method being a sort of counterpart of the same ancient conception.<sup>3</sup> Thus the whole sociologico-legal theorem under notice has gone to pieces. In his latest volume he unthinkingly makes an admission which explodes all his earlier criticism of the French exponents of the Law of Nature, since it clearly implies that their method was justifiable, and leads us up to the perception that it was inevitable. It is without any apparent thought of impeaching Bentham that he writes the following passage:—

"Now how did this fundamental assumption of equality, which (I may observe) broadly distinguishes Bentham's theories from some systems with which it is supposed to share the reproach of having pure selfishness for its base—how did it suggest itself to Bentham's mind? He saw plainly—nobody more clearly—that men are not as a fact equal; the proposition that men are by nature equal he expressly denounced as an anarchical sophism. Whence then came the equality which is a postulate of his famous doctrine about the greatest happiness of the greatest number? I venture to think that this doctrine is *nothing more than a working rule of legislation, and that in this form it was originally conceived by Bentham.*"<sup>4</sup>

If that be a vindication of Bentham, Rousseau and his school need no other, for nothing can be clearer than that it was by way of a working rule of legislation that they handled the concept of the State of Nature. And when we

<sup>1</sup> P. 85.    <sup>2</sup> P. 176.    <sup>3</sup> Pp. 78, 79.    <sup>4</sup> *Popular Government*, p. 399.



come to the last analysis we see that they were but following an ethical process which all rational law must follow, to wit, setting up the abstract regulating conception of Natural Rights, conceived as a claim to Reciprocity between men. It is one of the early successes of Mr Spencer to have seen this indestructible psychological truth behind the last-century phrase when nearly all his contemporaries were deriding it, and to have reformulated it as the Law of Equal Liberty. Maine, on the other hand, as we have seen, only comes within sight of the truth in the act of overthrowing, in his last volume, a main theorem of his first.

The foregoing, I think, will serve to show that those who take Maine's most prominent work for good sociology can hardly be reckoned masters in that province. He represents for us, finally, a not uncommon type in aristocratic England, the high-bred and scholarly man of prejudice, sensitively averse to the noise and windiness of popular democratic propaganda, and skilful enough to manœuvre against that, but incapable of a philosophy profound enough to deal impartially with democratic prejudice and its contrary. In his late volume entitled "Popular Government" he affected to dislike democratic declamation on purely intellectual, indeed almost æsthetic grounds. The essays of a number of French Rousseauists of last century, he says, "furnish very disagreeable proof that the intellectual flower of a cultivated nation may be brought, by fanatical admiration of a social and political theory, into a condition of downright mental imbecility."<sup>1</sup> It is easy to see that this is but one of the devices of "good form." Many sorts of "downright imbecility" lay under Maine's notice; for if we are entitled to apply that term to the speculative extravagances, often only half-serious, of certain innovating French writers of last century, we are emphatically bound to apply it to the whole body of self-confounding religious opinions held by the mass of Maine's own Christian contemporaries, and to the prostration of the intellect and the self-respect of the average man of his

<sup>1</sup> Work cited, p. 75.

own class before the institution of the monarchy. It is indeed safe to say that if Maine and his school had ever bethought them to criticise Jesus Christ and his early followers on the principles on which they criticised Rousseau, there would be stirring times in the theological world.

The fundamental contradictions which we have seen to be set up in his primary sociology by his prepossessions, are naturally repeated in his treatment of present-day politics. In his essays on present-day problems he is at much pains to insist that "the process known to us as reforming legislation," "which is an indispensable, though in the long-run a very subordinate, province of a good modern government—is not at all peculiar to Democracies." The qualifying clauses already suggest the division existing between Maine's theses, but he goes on to make his proposition more stringent. "The great authors of legislative change have been powerful Monarchies."<sup>1</sup> And now "Nineveh and Babylon" are added to that ever-lengthening list of States which Maine from time to time admits to have made legislative progress, despite his other doctrine that legislative progress has always been confined to a very small part of the human race. "The trituration of old usage was carried infinitely further by the Roman Emperors" than even by Nineveh and Babylon—though we were told in "Ancient Law" that the great merit of the Roman law was to be gradual in its progress, as compared with the too rapid democracies of Greece, whose sins in that line are now entirely forgotten. The purpose is now to show that democracies are essentially "unprogressive." It is admitted<sup>2</sup> that Democracy and Monarchy alike, "when they are first established *in absolute completeness*, are highly destructive." But "there is no belief less warranted by actual experience, than that a democratic

<sup>1</sup> *Popular Government*, p. 65. Maine was perhaps started on this line of argument by the fact, noted by de Tocqueville (*Démoc. en Amérique*, introd.) that "in France the great Kings have shown themselves the most active and the most constant of levellers." But this is essentially a different proposition.

<sup>2</sup> P. 66.

republic is, *after the first and in the long-run*, given to reforming legislation. As is well known to scholars, the ancient republics hardly legislated at all: their democratic energy was expended upon war, diplomacy, and justice; but they put nearly insuperable obstacles in the way of a change of law."<sup>1</sup> Here we have a flat denial of what was previously affirmed as to Greece, the affirmation and the denial being alike partisan inspirations. The first idea was to show how dangerously unstable democracies tend to be: the present purpose is to show that "the legislative infertility of democracies springs from permanent causes."<sup>2</sup>

And the proof is worthy of the proposition. It is naturally hard to make it out alongside of the contrary doctrine that democracies are dangerously given to innovation. So we arrive in another essay at the view that the "zeal for political movement, gradually identifying itself with a taste for Democracy, has not as yet fully had its way in all the societies of Western Europe. But it has greatly affected the institutions of some of them. . . ."<sup>3</sup> Again, "to the fact that the enthusiasm for change is comparatively rare must be added the fact that it is extremely modern. . . . It is not older than the free employment of legislation by popular government."<sup>4</sup> So that "Nineveh and Babylon" and the much-triturating Roman Emperors must after all be given up. The present argument requires different support. The theory now on hand is that "our periods of what would now be called legislative reforming activity have been connected with moments, not of violent political, but of violent religious emotion"<sup>5</sup>—as in "the dominion of Cromwell and the Independents (the true precursors of the modern Irreconcilables)," and in the anti-Catholic revulsion under James II. This after the explicit declaration that "the great authors of legislative change have been powerful monarchies."

The question now arises somewhat insistently, What would our author be at? What *is* his doctrine concerning Democracy? "The English Parliament, as has been said,"

<sup>1</sup> P. 67.<sup>2</sup> P. 67.<sup>3</sup> P. 129.<sup>4</sup> P. 125.<sup>5</sup> P. 135.

he writes, "legislated very little until fifty years since" (Cromwell and the Independents being now in turn put out of sight), "when it fell under the influence of Bentham and his disciples."<sup>1</sup> But we had been told in the previous essay that only "at the first," or when "in absolute completeness," is a democracy progressive and legislative. Now, British democracy was certainly very far from completeness fifty years ago: it is far from completeness now. Yet here we are declared to be peculiarly legislative and progressive just at the time that the monarchy has reached its point of slightest influence. Once more, what becomes of the doctrine as to the legislative activity of powerful monarchies? Is the proposition now to be that it is an amalgam of aristocracy and democracy that is peculiarly given to legislation? Is there any theory or proposition left standing on its feet, out of the whole series we have passed under review?

I can see none. Maine destroys his own positions one after another; and the reason is that at bottom he lacks both logic and insight, and blindly catches at any species of plea wherewith he can seemingly discredit the political tendencies he does not like. In one mood he thinks to put democracy in a bad light by showing that it makes for hasty change, instability, anarchy. In another mood he bethinks him that democracies, after all, must resemble the masses of uncultured mankind in non-democratic nations; so he goes about to show that instead of being open to new ideas, they are highly conservative and devoted to routine. He does not see that the one assertion negates the other. The only argument he leaves standing against democracy is the suggestion that if the populace in *monarchical* times had had the franchise "there would have been no reformation of religion, no change of dynasty, no toleration of Dissent, not even an accurate Calendar," and machinery would have been prohibited.<sup>2</sup> To see how purely factious, how entirely unjudicial is the argument, we have only to remember that in autocratic Russia *to this day* the Calendar

<sup>1</sup> *Popular Government*, p. 148.

<sup>2</sup> Work cited, p. 98.

remains unreformed ; whereas such a "powerful monarchy" should, on Maine's own theory, be one of the first States to make the change. Again, the boldest attempts ever made at reforming a Calendar in modern times were those of the French Revolutionists, who were democratic or nothing. The other pleas, as to reformation of religion, change of dynasty, and toleration of Dissent, are about as flimsy as that concerning the Calendar. But even if these propositions were all defensible, which they are not, they clearly count for nothing as against the credit of democracy now, when all that Maine can say on the same line is that "vaccination is in the utmost danger!"—vaccination, as to which he had made no special study whatever, and which is mainly attacked by men who have made it a special study. Beyond this his concrete pleading is commonplace Conservative carping, tending distinctly to senility ; while his abstract reasoning, as we have seen, is a chaos. His polemic is perfectly described by his account of a polemic which he supposes himself to be rebutting :—

"The fact is that political theories are endowed with the faculty possessed by the hero of the Border-ballad. When their legs are smitten off they fight upon their stumps. They produce a host of words, and of ideas associated with those words, which remain active and combatant after the parent speculation is mutilated and dead."<sup>1</sup>

*De se fabula*, as we have seen. The legs are smitten by himself from every one of his most general doctrines in turn ; and there stands the mangled row, fit only to serve as scarecrows or milestones to the traveller. But there are travellers who can see in them as-it-were sacred boundary-stones, even as the legless Hermæ of Greece. People of Maine's cast of mind and temperament are always found stultifying themselves in this fashion : it was so with Burke, whose latter-day attack on the democratic philosophy of his time is a tissue of the most abject inconsistency : it was so with Joseph de Maistre, who, indeed, in many ways approaches nearer to Maine than to Burke. But the central intellectual fact in all three cases is that a prepossession, a

<sup>1</sup> P. 153.

prejudice, a passion, primes the whole utterance, and that the arguments are found for the conclusion instead of the conclusion being deduced from the arguments. That course may at times be taken by a good reasoner without logical disaster ; but he had need go warily ; while the second-rate reasoner is pretty sure to come to harm. And that Burke, de Maistre, and Maine were all seriously defective in logical insight, lies on the face of their relation to the religious problems of their time. Maine's case is perhaps in a manner doubtful, in comparison with the others. He has certainly little of their pious fervour ; and he of course never approaches the extremes of solemn absurdity reached by de Maistre, though he often recalls him by his scrupulously well-bred manner. But it is a question of culture-stage ; and, relatively to the enlightenment of his time, Maine was sufficiently backward, whether or not he did his obeisance to orthodoxy in the interests of his political propaganda. It is significant that on the one point of political science on which he was more scientific than other leading Conservatives, he was virtually anti-scientific in his attitude to practice. He makes the startling assertion that "all this beneficent prosperity [of the United States] is the fruit of recognising the principle of population, and *the one remedy for its excess in perpetual emigration.*"<sup>1</sup> Such a thinker might well oppose democracy, offering it such an outlook. On his view there is no prospect before mankind save one of chronic climax to the state of convulsion or congestion, to be relieved only by wholesale expatriation or migration. Yet there lay before Maine as before mankind the spectacle of the limitation of population in France ; and he must have known of the Neo-Malthusian propaganda, which sets forth how population may humanely and sanely be restrained. His phrase as it stands does not indeed deny that "excess" of population may be prevented ; but here and elsewhere, in referring to the population question, he keeps the possibility of scientific control entirely out of sight. And that, it must be said, is the

<sup>1</sup> *Popular Government*, p. 51.

usual attitude of Conservatives<sup>1</sup> who recognise that there is a law of population at all. It is for them merely an argument against social and political reform in general; and when reformers undertake to enlighten the people on the subject, they rarely receive the least countenance from the Conservatives in question, who indeed often join in denouncing them for their educative action.

It is only right to add, by way of giving Maine all due credit for judgment in certain matters of sociology, that he at least once strongly declared against the obstinate popular fallacy, nowhere more obstinate or more popular than in England, that differences in the lot of nations are to be explained not by circumstances but by inherent qualities of "race." It is in a work dealing with the historical development of a people whom Englishmen are always charging with inherent and primordial defects of race-character, the Irish, that Maine wrote:—

"It is to be hoped that contemporary thought will before long make an effort to emancipate itself from those habits of levity in adopting theories of race which it seems to have contracted. Many of these theories appear to have little merit except the facility which they give for building on them inferences tremendously out of proportion to the mental labour which they cost the builder."<sup>2</sup>

And here, it will be observed, he strictly coincides with the teaching of Buckle, whom so many assailants have belittled in comparison with him; and who is perhaps more often attacked for this teaching than for any other, by these very assailants.<sup>3</sup>

What it concerns us to note finally, however, is that the before-noted collapses and collisions of Maine's teaching occur mainly among the most general and socially im-

<sup>1</sup> It is only fair to say that Liberals are not much more conscientious. The late Mr Bradlaugh was the only prominent politician of his day who really pressed the law of population on public attention, though Mr Morley and Mr Leonard Courtney have avowed its profound importance.

<sup>2</sup> *Early History of Institutions*, pp. 96-97.

<sup>3</sup> It is interesting, in this connection, to note the educative effect of Buckle's book on the late J. R. Lowell, who was confessedly given to "facile" formulas about race characteristics. See his *Letters*, i. 317-318.

portant of his doctrines. They are not slips on side issues ; they are vital self-contradictions on public themes on which Maine was supposed to speak with the special authority of a deep jurist, trained to method and precision. There is no point in praising him for his influence on thought if the main practical bearing of his teaching is not held to have been praiseworthy, or if his most comprehensive reasoning is not held to have been sound. That he should have had such a repute, then, is a significant fact. Either the foregoing criticism is itself wholly astray, or he has been praised for powers he did not possess. The solution seems to me to be that he found his public, in some measure, as Burke and de Maistre found theirs, with this special advantage, that he stood high as a jurist pure and simple. Burke found a host of admiring readers because he offered an eloquent semblance of a philosophical answer to democratic philosophy ; and de Maistre found admirers because in an ostensibly cool and self-contained way he connectedly and persistently impugned all the heterodoxy of the pre-Revolution period. Maine in his turn has found admirers among his professional students, and general readers over and above, because at a time when Liberalism appeared to be carrying all before it he supplied the semblance of a scientific impeachment of all democracy to the large and influential classes, professional and lay, which in England are predisposed to dislike democracy. These classes reason confusedly just as Maine himself does. Thus it came about that when he damned democracy alternately as overprogressive and as unprogressive, disparaged mankind as inveterately conservative and denounced large sections of it as given to rash innovation, he was equally welcome to an order of intelligence habituated to incoherence and hospitable to inconsistency. On the other hand, he has fallen on a time when English Liberalism, becoming eminently respectable and popular and opportunist under Mr Gladstone, has had less of new philosophic service done for it, comparatively speaking, than had been done for generations back : and in the lack of capable opposition his



singularly ill-constructed lines of argument have seemed vaguely powerful even to many who disliked them.

For the rest, Maine may have profited (on this I have no knowledge) by personal charm or amenity of character, as he certainly did by the candour of magnanimous Liberals who were ready to admit merit in the work of an anti-democrat. Thus he had the ungrudging praise of Grote<sup>1</sup> and Mill,<sup>2</sup> the latter noting that Maine's work did good which it had not aimed at. All round, in fine, Maine has had from Liberal readers a generosity of treatment that he, on his part, cannot be accused of according to Liberal ideas or to Liberal writers.

#### § 5. *German Sociology to Schäffle.*

I. In checking Vorländer's criticism of Buckle, we have seen how the modern literature of Germany originates in the stimulus given by that of France to the long-backward German intelligence. This holds substantially true even of the scientific and scholarly literature in which Germany has since outgone every other nation. In a list of the leading literary men who passed away between the death of Leibnitz and that of Lessing,<sup>3</sup> though there appear a round dozen of men of great learning, and some of scientific eminence, there are none who can be said to outshine the similar celebrities of France, or to be indebted to French leading. Thus Wolff, (1679-1754), Fabricius (d. 1736), Baumgarten (d. 1757), Abbt (d. 1766), Süssmilch (d. 1767), Winckelmann (d. 1768), Reimarus (d. 1768), Brucker (d. 1770) Mosheim (d. 1755), and Walch (d. 1775), representing as they do the "first flight" of modern German erudition, owe much to foreign light, though they themselves one and all, writing mostly in Latin, gave new lights to Europe in their several departments. So with Stahl and von Haller, if Stahl indeed can be said to have diffused light.

<sup>1</sup> *Plato*, ed. 1885, i. 382, note; ii. 342, note.

<sup>2</sup> *Dissertations and Discussions*, iv. 130.

<sup>3</sup> See the *Compendium der deutschen Literatur-Geschichte* of E. J. Koch, 1790, S. 55-60.

But the beginnings of modern German organisation, academic and national, are seen emerging at the same period. Thus in 1724 are founded the Berlin Medical College and the Patriotic Society of Hamburg; in 1728 the German Society of Jena; in 1734 the library and University of Göttingen; in 1741 the German societies of Greifswalde and Göttingen; in 1743 the University of Erlangen; in 1746 the German Society of Helmstädt; in 1757 and 1759 is begun the series of literary publications of Nicolai and Moses Mendelssohn; in 1763 is founded the German society of Mannheim; in 1764 is begun the publication of the *Allgemeine Deutsches Bibliothek*; in 1759 is established the Bavarian Academy; in 1765 the Academy of Sciences at Erfurt, and so on. The rapidity of the intellectual development, once begun, is in itself a notable sociological phenomenon. Within fifty years of the issue of Mosheim's "Institutes of Ecclesiastical History," the first ecclesiastical history worthy of the name produced by a German, five others were published, by Baumgarten, Henke, Semler, Schmidt, and Schroeckh, the last filling forty-five volumes; while Walch, Mosheim's successor at Helmstädt, produced studies of early Christian history which at once took a standard place; and long before the century was out, "German rationalism" in the department of Christian theology and Biblical criticism, the result of German learning on one hand and English and French stimulus on the other, had constituted an epoch. Nor was the growth less remarkable in *belles lettres*. The new German romanticism, culminating in the manifold product of Goethe, reacted almost as powerfully on France<sup>1</sup> as the French example had acted on Germany; and intellectual Europe was richer by a new national literature.

II. The development on the sociological side was naturally much slower, theology having been the specialty of a whole era, and the profession of a whole class. We have noted the expansion given by Herder, in his *Ideen*

<sup>1</sup> Even the obstreperous Barbey d'Aurevilly, in the act of belittling Goethe, admits his conquest of France (*Goethe et Diderot*, Introd. pp. iv. v).

*zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit* (1784) to ideas which reached him from France and Scotland, and in part perhaps from Lessing's *Die Erziehung des Menschengeschlechts*. The latter has little or no scientific value for to-day, being but a substitution of a universal for a particular conception of providential control of human affairs, a process exclusive of a true study of causation; and we have seen how little direct influence was exercised by Herder's treatise in his own and the next generation. The fact was that, where England developed on the side of industry, and cultivated social science in the line of mercantile economics, Germany with its system of university specialism, overhauled after Jena, proceeded to cultivate chiefly abstract philosophy and detail scholarship, with what copious results in both directions it is needless to say. And both developments bear on the construction of modern sociology. Kant,<sup>1</sup> Hegel, and Fichte, each gave searching attention to the political problems of their time. Kant's *Idee zu einer allgemeinen Geschichte in weltbürgerlicher Absicht*<sup>2</sup> (1784), as has been noted by Huxley, "anticipates the application of the 'struggle for existence' to politics, and indicates the manner in which the evolution of society has resulted from the constant attempt of individuals to strain its bonds. If individuality has no play, society does not advance; if individuality breaks out of all bounds, society perishes."<sup>3</sup> Here is a profound and substantially scientific thought; yet it is grafted on a characteristic teleological doctrine of a certain "plan" and "purpose" in "Nature." It seemed as if Kant, standing midway between theology and naturalism properly so called, must needs thus teleologise and personalise in regard to cosmic forces. Again

<sup>1</sup> It is admitted that Kant was greatly stimulated by Montesquieu and Rousseau. Stuckenberg's *Life of Kant*, pp. 127, 147.

<sup>2</sup> Translated (freely) by De Quincey under the title *Idea of a Universal History on a Cosmo-Political Plan* (which is a better rendering than Huxley's "in relation to Universal Citizenship"). See vol. xii. of 1863 ed. of his Works.

<sup>3</sup> Huxley's *Collected Essays*, i. 277.

and again he speaks of the "intention" of Nature, of Nature having "willed" certain things; and as he had compromised with Theism in his *Kritik*, so he here compromises by adding "or rather Providence" to one of his allusions to Nature.<sup>1</sup> He evidently felt it necessary to hold out the conception of plan and purpose by way of winning men to believe in progress. Still, his account of the purposive play of strife in Nature is audacious enough, relatively to the theology of his age, which made strife the penalty for sin. "Thanks be to Nature," he says in so many words, "for the discordancy, for the suspicious and envious pride, for the unappeasable lust of possession, and also of lordship! Without these, all the excellent proclivities of mankind would forever have slumbered, unevolved. Man desires comity; but Nature knows better what is good for his species; she ordains enmity."<sup>2</sup> These provisions, he hardly affirms, "betray the direction of a wise Creator;" and he lays it down again as a main proposition<sup>3</sup> that "the means employed by Nature to bring about the développement of all her tendencies is their antagonism in Society, so far, that is, as they tend to originate a law-abiding régime."

Such a doctrine is scarcely optimistic; and as the exposition proceeds, so much is plainly avowed. Man, in terms of his nature, needs a ruler; and the ruler in turn is a man, sure to misuse his power; so the perfect solution of the problem of government is impossible. "Out of wood so crooked as man is made of, nothing quite straight can be wrought. Only an approximation to the idea is permitted us by Nature."<sup>4</sup> In a note he adds that in another planet perhaps every individual may attain his fit development (*Bestimmung*); with us it is otherwise: only the species can hope for that." This is the second main proposition: "All the natural tendencies of man, the only reasonable creature on the earth, tend to be completely

<sup>1</sup> *Idee zu einer allgemeinen Geschichte*, in *Vermischte Schriften*, Ausgabe 1799, Halle, ii. 685.

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* S. 676-671.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* Vierter Satz.

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.* S. 673-4.

developed in so far as they aim at the use of his reason," but this "only in the species, not in the individual."

Still, with all the restriction of hope, the main propositions stand: (5th) "that the great problem for mankind, to the solution of which it is driven by Nature, is the attainment of a universal civil society enforcing justice," in which there shall be the fullest freedom—including the free play of antagonism between the members—"with the strictest regulation of that freedom in the interest of all;" and though (6th) "this is the hardest problem of all," it is to be faced. The conditions are justly specified: (7th) the problem "depends on that of a law-abiding international system of State-relations, and cannot be solved without that." Inasmuch as the separate States in turn represent the individual attitude of lawless liberty as regards each other, there must be a peace-making confederation of States. There is no other way, let the cynics laugh as they will. And the philosopher curiously forecasts the real course of latter-day history—though he probably did not count on another century of growing armaments—when he generalises that Nature drives men to peace through the intensifying penalties of war. Security against the collapse of civilisation in a "hell of evils," followed by a resurgence of barbarism, can only be had by underlaying blind instinct with a thread of reason. Finally, as we set out with an assumed purpose in Nature, we conclude (8th) that only in a universal peaceful polity can Nature's purposes be fully realised: and (9th) that a universal history written on this assumption may actually further the purposes in question.

It is all a remarkable anticipation of the humanitarian sociology and Darwinian biology of our own day—despite the old-world adhesion to teleology. Yet it must be admitted that the total doctrine is so shaped as to give superfluous countenance to the current creed of repression. The doctrine that "all the culture and art which adorn humanity, the most refined social order, are produced by the *unsociability* which is compelled by its own existence

to discipline itself" is indeed a broad vindication of social strife; but to describe the factors of intellectual friction and competition as forms of "unsociability" is to offer an obvious encouragement to theological power to restrict them, especially in times of revolution. And Kant's own activities, at least, were duly so restricted.<sup>1</sup>

III. From Fichte, again, comes unexpectedly enough one of the most concrete and practical of the German philosophic treatises on social policy, the essay on a "Closed Industrial State," which is in some respects yet more modern than Kant's, and which has struck the much-questioning Huxley<sup>2</sup> as the least challengeable of all the modern schemes for making an end of poverty in a community. It virtually recognises, independently of Malthus,<sup>3</sup> the pre-eminent importance of restraint of population; but its practical teaching consists<sup>4</sup> in laying down with great energy and perspicacity the ground principle of State Socialism. Whether or not consciously, modern German Socialism may be said to develop from the standpoint of Fichte's essay, corrected by that of Kant's. Fichte demands that the government shall secure work and well-being for all by regulating the balance of industry and overruling free competition; he denies the principle of property in things—here following Rousseau and Brissot de Warville<sup>5</sup>—and he leads up to the later ethical view that ideal Property is essentially the enjoyment of the environment "proper" to us. At the same time, it is a true criticism that "the State which Fichte wished to institute would be a sort of Sparta, where, in order to guarantee the liberty of all, an insupportable tyranny would stifle individual liberty—" <sup>6</sup> a difficulty with which

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 150.

<sup>2</sup> *Essays*, as cited, i. 429.

<sup>3</sup> Fichte's essay was published in 1800.

<sup>4</sup> For a thorough analysis of this treatise in connection with Fichte's other writings on polity, see Mr Bonar's valuable work entitled *Philosophy and Political Economy*, B. iv, ch. 2.

<sup>5</sup> Fichte like them applies the term robbery to the current means of wealth-getting. *Der geschlossene Handelsstaat*, 1800, S. 126-127.

<sup>6</sup> Lévy-Bruhl, *L'Allemagne depuis Leibniz*, p. 273.

Mr Huxley did not attempt to deal. The great vices of the treatise as a plan of humane reform are, that it takes no account of the profound importance of mutual contact to the culture-life of nations, as seen in the late development of Germany itself; and that it wholly overlooks the necessity, seen by Kant, of a system of international peace to the development of the well-being of any one nation. As a matter of fact, Fichte's idea was by some credited with inspiring Napoleon's Berlin decree, which proposed to make a "Closed Industrial State" with a vengeance.

IV. In any case, Fichte's idea was ahead of his time for good and for evil; and in so far as Prussia after Jena was governed by a philosophic theory it was rather that of Hegel, who, beginning by calling Napoleon admiringly the "soul of the world," came to affirm "the original relatedness of the Prussian State and the Hegelian philosophy,"<sup>1</sup> and to applaud the war against Napoleon. The simple explanation was that originally Hegel was a Wurtemberger, and felt and spoke as one, while later he was chaired in Berlin. Thus are philosophers' politics determined, like other men's. But Hegel, having finally chosen his side, could contribute a compact philosophic vindication of the system it involved—the doctrine that the State is an absolute entity to start with, and that the business of political science is not to consider the rights or claims of the individual citizens but to realise the nature of the State as such and give effect to it. There was thus for him, apparently, no such ideal of progress through collision as had been set forth by Kant; and as a matter of fact the Prussian State was administered, at least after 1848, in terms of the Hegelian formula as far as might be—the idea proceeded on being that the State existed to reconstitute a military Germany.

V. Of course there were other ideals which clashed with this; and the very educational system of which Hegel made part, in particular the new University of Berlin (1810), involved a play of individual aspiration which

<sup>1</sup> Inaugural address at Berlin, cited by Lévy-Bruhl.

could not be wholly suppressed. The interlude of the great administration of Stein gave play to the living critical reason, which saw in the denial of individual claims the surest way to keep the State in its collective capacity weak, as against "the armed soldier of democracy." And it is a remarkable fact that while Fichte in 1800 produced the first clear-cut exposition of the gospel of State Socialism, Wilhelm von Humboldt had already in 1791 produced the classic statement of the gospel of Individualism—if we are not to give that rank to Godwin's "Political Justice" (which was actually published when written, whereas Humboldt's essay remained for sixty years in manuscript, save as regards some extracts)<sup>1</sup> or to Smith, who in turn had his inspiration from the Economists. Humboldt's doctrine is that the spirit of governing—Buckle's "Protective Spirit"—however wisely it is exercised, "invariably superinduces national uniformity, and a constrained and unnatural manner of action";<sup>2</sup> and that therefore "the State is to abstain from all solicitude for the positive welfare of the citizens, and not to proceed a step further than is necessary for their mutual security and protection against foreign enemies; for with no other object should it impose restrictions on freedom."<sup>3</sup> The statement here as to the invariability of a given result from protectionism is supported by no historic enquiry, and could be easily enough disproved,<sup>4</sup> as we have already seen, though we have to confess that Buckle repeated it in terms of an elaborate historical survey. Humboldt, in fine, makes a mainly deductive demonstration, although a powerful one at that; and as he is thus distinctly less practical than Fichte, his essay would pro-

<sup>1</sup> Fichte in his *Handelsstaat* recognises at the outset that there are two extreme views of the State, one making it absolutely paternal, the other making it a mere keeper of the peace.

<sup>2</sup> *Sphere and Duties of Government*, Eng. trans., p. 21. Cf. pp. 35, 69, &c.

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*, p. 44.

<sup>4</sup> In respect, that is, of the fact that ideas may counteract the levelling tendency, and did so in Europe last century in all directions.



bably have availed little even if published when written, his own political career being soon interrupted by his fundamental differences with his colleagues. The German sociology of that era, then, may be summed up as consisting in the output of a number of more or less important theories and principles of the grounds of political action and the movement of civilisation,<sup>1</sup> without founding or elucidating them by an exact inductive study of historic facts, or by a proper colligation of the data of the different sciences bearing on social beginnings. The method, too, remained metaphysical, and in large part theistic or pantheistic, Humboldt's rationalism being little in evidence. In fine, the era of positive and inductive sociology was not yet.

VI. There was, indeed, something of retrogression, if we measure from such an initiative as that given by A. L. Heeren. The Essay on the Influence of the Crusades,<sup>2</sup> which won half the prize offered by the section of History and Ancient Literature in the French Institute, is a sound piece of sociological work, still worth study. It was the first comprehensive survey of the subject, with the exception of Hüllmann's *Geschichte des Byzantischen Handels bis zum Ende der Kreuzzüge* (1808) and Wilken's *Geschichte der Kreuzzüge*, of which only the first volume had appeared when Heeren wrote; and it exhibits a breadth of view not seen in later investigations.<sup>3</sup> The Crusades as a whole Heeren treats perhaps more imaginatively than justly, as belonging properly to the order of phenomena of the transmigrations of peoples, a subject which always interested him greatly,<sup>4</sup> and in this spirit he repels, romanti-

<sup>1</sup> Fichte added to Kant's general thesis of progression a scheme of Five Stages, in which he placed contemporary civilisation at the fourth. See Bonar, as cited, pp. 295-296.

<sup>2</sup> *Entwicklung der Folgen der Kreuzzüge für Europa.*

<sup>3</sup> For instance, the able little book of Sir George W. Cox, valuable alike as a history and as an ethical criticism, throws no such light on collateral results as does Heeren.

<sup>4</sup> Translator's pref. to Eng. version of Greek section of Heeren's *Ideen* on the Ancient Nations (*Sketch of Pol. Hist. of Anc. Greece*, 1829). Cf. Eng. tr. of his *Historical Treatises*, 1836, p. 147.

cally rather than ethically, the general moral charges brought against them. But his handling of the process and of the consequences is luminous and scientific. He puts his finger at the outset on the general fact, restated by Buckle,<sup>1</sup> that the Arab and Mongol peoples rose rapidly to civilisation by reason of migration into new environments; and he gives the cue to Guizot regarding the effect of manifoldness and complexity of factors in European civilisation,<sup>2</sup> bringing into clear and explanatory relief the mutual reactions of Byzantium, Asia Minor, and Italy, before and after the Crusades and during the Crusading period—an essentially important chapter in European civilization. His earlier *Entwicklung der politischen Folgen der Reformation für Europa*<sup>3</sup> has less originality and fulness, but it too has the sociological note; and though his political purpose gives a touch of commonplace to his treatise on the Influence of Political Theories on Europe, it has a practical interest and value of its own as beside the abstract reasonings of Hegel. And though a large part of his learned investigations as to the "Politics, Intercourse, and Trade of the principal Nations of Antiquity" is necessarily a groping for facts, the section on Greece has real value as an explanation of certain main phases of Greek life. He anticipated Curtius in his opening picture of the land and its fruits; he clearly saw the causation of Greek mental life by the reactions of the surrounding civilisations; and his remarks on the intellectual results of the almost complete absence of anything like a priestly caste or corporation among the Greeks<sup>4</sup> are perhaps not less important and certainly not less true than those of Guizot and Comte on the separation of the spiritual and the temporal power in Christendom. Only

<sup>1</sup> I. 45, *et seq.* Buckle, however, does not cite this work of Heeren.

<sup>2</sup> See below, § 6, iii.; and cf. the *Essai sur l'Influence des Croisades*, in Villiers' French trans., p. 348; *Historical Treatises*, Eng. trans., p. 117; and *Pol. Hist. of Ancient Greece*, Eng. trans., p. 156 (ch. ix, end).

<sup>3</sup> Also written for a prize offered by the French Institute, but not sent in. His friend Villiers was the winner.

<sup>4</sup> Ch. iii., Eng. trans., as cited, pp. 59-63.

the conventionality of his ideals and of his didactics prevents his study of Greek polity from comparing with that of Montesquieu<sup>1</sup> on the Roman; and despite these limitations, he could give Buckle<sup>2</sup> the cue for his general contrast between the European and non-European civilisations, which forms the theme of Heeren's Preliminary Remarks on the affairs of Greece, an able general survey, though flawed by some bad errors of fact.<sup>3</sup> In reading him one asks, as so often in studying culture history, Why, when so much has been done to institute a science of history, was not progress therein continuous and rapid? We can but say that the academic and other forces making for subdivision of the study were stronger than those making for general views. In any case, no one with as broad and manifold general interests as Heeren arose to build on his foundations, though his great learning was rivalled by many. Wachsmuth, who is credited by Weber<sup>4</sup> with more thorough study as well as with deeper learning, is not to be compared with him as a thinker or sociologist, having all Heeren's narrower ideas without any of his insight or originality.

VII. What went forward above all in the reorganised Prussian State, and by consequence in the universities of other parts of Germany, was a laborious accumulation of exact knowledge of classic antiquity, and all matters philological. In regard to Greece, the compilations of Wachsmuth, Hermann, and Boeckh, were crowned by the admirable performances of Karl Ottfried Müller, who brought to the interpretation of Greek history genius as well as learning, and brought into the study of Greek

<sup>1</sup> Whom Heeren had evidently profited by, and whom he worthily eulogises (*Historical Treatises*, Eng. tr., pp. 164-170).

<sup>2</sup> Here, again, however, Buckle does not note Heeren's observation. In his list of authorities he mentions Heeren's works on the African and Asiatic nations only.

<sup>3</sup> He oddly asserts that the inhabitants of Europe "were never wandering tribes." Yet it is plain that as late as the time of Cæsar the German tribes were partly nomadic. See Stubbs, *Const. Hist. of England*, 4th ed., i. 12-15, proceeding on Cæsar, *de Bello Gallico*, iv. 3; vi. 22, 23.

<sup>4</sup> *Geschichte der deutschen Literatur*, 11te Aufl., § 149.

literature in especial, for the first time, a generalising judgment of the highest order. In his steps has followed the unnumbered army of German specialists in Greek, among whom stand out Curtius, Duncker, Hetzberg, Busolt, and Holm, as unifiers of a new world of detail, as do Mommsen and Marquardt in the lore of Rome. And yet it cannot be said that Germany has given us a sociological history of ancient civilisation. The principle of specialisation has thus far yielded us on the one hand learned histories and on the other hand elaborate philosophies of history, but not a satisfactory fusion of the two. We have indeed an abundance of treatises such as those of Vorländer and Droysen, which elucidate nothing, or that of Dr Diesterweg, *Wegweiser zur Bildung für deutsche Lehrer*, in which, despite the undertaking of the title to offer a guide for students, we set out with a confused discussion of Buckle, proceeding on a few selected passages, with the usual results of misrepresentation and inconclusive criticism. Dr Diesterweg arrives at the conclusion that "history traces individual development, while natural science seeks general laws."<sup>1</sup> For him there would appear to be no general laws of social progress;<sup>2</sup> and he has apparently gone through Buckle without even realising what laws Buckle professed to posit.

Other results of the specialist tendency in Germany—a tendency which is not condemned in being thus indicated—is that specially obscure problems, such as the origin of language and the origin of property in land, are discussed with enormous industry and assiduity. To the great achievement of the scientific generalisation of the pedigrees and kinships of language, the Teutonic intelligence has sought to add the seizure of the laws of the

<sup>1</sup> Eng. trans. in *Methods of Teaching History*, Boston, 1883, p. 15.

<sup>2</sup> The editor of the first volume of the American "Pedagogical Library," in which Diesterweg's *Wegweiser* is translated, is of opinion that "despite his obscure and often confusing style, which renders an entirely satisfactory translation quite impossible, the monograph of Diesterweg presents a better and more comprehensive view of the questions which interest German teachers than any other."

genesis of language itself, with what results English readers may partly gather from the writings of Professor Müller. More definite results have been reached by the anthropologists who investigate the beginnings of institutions; and when the new views broached by Bachofen have been duly criticised, and the attrition of the doctrines of von Maurer by the tests of Fustel de Coulanges has been rightly estimated, there will doubtless be a valuable residuum of knowledge wherewith to partially fill the gap between the ape-man and the barbarian. The readjustment of doctrine as to the origin of the Aryans, again,<sup>1</sup> with the result of establishing the view that they originated in Europe and sent some swarms to Asia, and not *vice-versa*—this is a most important extension of historical knowledge, and consequently of the field of sociological science. But still the unifying sociology, induced from history and capable of deductive verification, is to seek. What is forthcoming in professed sociology, as we shall see, is something different.

VIII. Before we come to consider the current sociology of Germany, however, it behoves us to note the rise there of one school of thought which offers at last a definite nucleus for a sociology—the school of Collectivist Socialism. The economic ideas which in England took form first with Owen, and which in France were variously developed by Fourier and Saint-Simon and Proudhon, found later in Germany a congenial soil and a systematic development; and though the movement of Lassalle broke down like those set up in England and France, the teaching of Marx has not passed away. As a system of economic logic, indeed, it has been sufficiently trituated; and its strange stress on the formula of “surplus value” is apt to make one do less than justice to its scientific value. But there is in *Das Kapital* a sociological teaching of permanent importance, and that is the principle which has been stated by his followers as “Economic determinism.” That principle is

<sup>1</sup> See a connected view of much German discussion on this subject in Mr Isaac Taylor's *Origin of the Aryans*.

not a new one for the students of Buckle ; but it is newly applied by the school of Marx,<sup>1</sup> in terms of the economic life not of the primary civilisations but of the most complex industrial civilisation of to-day. And it is a good confirmation of the general views we have already reached as to the conditions of progress in knowledge and civilisation, to note that Marx represents the results of a German theorist's stay in and study of industrial England, with the mercantile economic to try his teeth with on the one hand, and the stimulus of French schemes of organisation on the other. The socialism of Marx is a complex of the sociological cultures of three environments ; and it is some confirmation of our doctrine of the effects of cross-fertilisation of ideas that this result should be the most effective performance in its kind. As for the violence of Marx's tone, the utter lack of amenity in his polemic, it may perhaps be ascribed to "race" with more plausibility than belongs to most ascriptions of the kind. In him the Teutonised Jew seems to out-Teuton the Teuton in controversial discourtesy, making every alleged error of an opponent a theme for scurrile adjectives, when all the while he had involved himself in formal fallacies of the most grotesque description<sup>2</sup> by way of making the foundation he supposed to be necessary for his political programme.

It is not necessary here, however, to discuss further Marx's economic sociology, beyond noting that it is not the all-embracing social philosophy that he and his followers esteem it. The principle of economic determinism, the doctrine that all social phases, early and late, are to be explained in terms of economic conditions, is indeed of profound importance, but it is not the whole of interpretative sociology, and used as a sole interpretative principle it may lead to all manner of errors. In the words of Mr Bonar :—"The view that all history is economical seems to be as abstract as Ricardo's economics, on which Marx founds his own political economy. Historical

<sup>1</sup> It is unnecessary here to go into the question of Marx's debt to Rodbertus.

<sup>2</sup> *E.g.*, his reasonings on "Value" at the outset of his treatise.

Economists have pointed in the opposite direction ; they have reasoned 'from particular to particular' ; they have tended to explain all economics by the other elements in history rather than all history by its economical element."<sup>1</sup> Obviously the right method is to recognise and trace the reactions of all the factors : once more, to return to the method and the basis of Buckle,<sup>2</sup> correcting these as we have seen to be fit and necessary.

IX. We must first reckon, however, with the most elaborate development that has yet been given in modern Germany to the idea of social science, a development certainly owing something to Marx, and in large part in harmony with his doctrine, but ostensibly more akin to the sociological method of Mr Spencer.

It is with something like a sinking of the heart that even a reader enamoured of sociology approaches the work of the most eminent German sociologist of the day. The "Bau und Leben des Socialen Körpers" is one of those great books which can hardly be acquitted of being a great evil. Its very title : " Build and Life of the Social Body ; an encyclopedic plan of a real Anatomy, Physiology, and Psychology of human society, with special regard to political economy as social metabolism," is enough to give pause to the hardest student ; and there can be few who have ploughed their way through the four awful volumes of close-packed, emaciated, weary German type. Sociology in Schäffle's hands becomes a specialty with a vengeance. It must indeed have taken generations of specialism to make it seem fitting, in the eyes of a wise and deeply thoughtful man, as Dr Schäffle undoubtedly is, to condemn himself to a species of monumental isolation as a writer on a subject which might be supposed specially to lend itself to a treatment that would interest the mass of educated men. I despair of conveying any general idea of either the matter or the manner of Dr Schäffle's colossal treatise. As regards manner it is a perfect maze of subdivision on subdivision. For instance, the first

<sup>1</sup> *Philosophy and Political Economy*, p. 392.    <sup>2</sup> Cp. Mr Bonar, pp. 365-366.

volume sets out with an Introduction, dealing with "Anatomic Bases," which is followed by a "General Part," divided and subdivided as follows—

*I. Elements of Body Politic*, divided into

- I. Externals.
- II. Nation's (passive) capacity.
- III. Individual element and population, divided into 4 sections, of which
  - § 2, Spiritual fitness of man for society, is subdivided into
    - A (subdivided into 4 sections).
    - B (subdivided into 5, of which 5 is subdivided into *A, B, C, D*);
  - while § 4 is subdivided into *A, B, C, D, E*, of which *A* in turn divides into 4 heads.

*II. The Family as Social tissue-cell*, divided into 4 parts, of which

- I. subdivides into *A, B, C, D*.
- II. into *A, B, C, D, E*,
- III. into 3 sections, of which
  - § 2 divides into *A, B, C, D*.

*III. The Tissue of the Social Body*, divided into 2 parts, of which

- I. subdivides into 6 sections.
- II. subdivides into 4, of which
  - § 1 subdivides into
    - A*, and that into 1 and 2;
    - B*, into 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8;
    - C*.
  - § 2 into *A, B, C, D, E, F*, of which
    - E* divides into
      - 1, which divides into *a, b, c*;
      - 2, which divides into *a, b*;
      - and 3; while
      - F* divides into 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.
  - § 3 (on the actual state of various social tissues in present day civilisation) *one page*; then
  - § 4 (on the relation of the tissue to the organ) 7 pages.



All this, be it observed, takes us through only about four hundred pages of vol. I. We have discussed all manner of psychic and physiological analogies; and still

"Yonder all before us lie  
Deserts of vast eternity,"

filled with similar sandy discussion. After two volumes, the first issue of the work, came at an interval of years two more, which undertake to set forth "genetically" a number of phenomena simply analysed in the first volume, and to analyse *further* and show the evolution of the system of main organs of the body politic. It may suffice to say of this undertaking, summarily, that it seems to any eye but that of a specialist of specialists an immense abuse of abstraction, and, with all its patient reasoning, an unprofitable treatment of the problems of society. As if enough had not already been done with the dubious analogy between the animal organism and the State, Dr Schäffle serenely sets himself to carry it to the limits of human endurance. He remarks that "works attempting to do for Sociology what is done for Biology by Histology, Anatomy, and Physiology, works such as Comte's *Philosophie Positive* and Herbert Spencer's various meritorious productions, have rather followed the phenomena of social evolution, and set back the elementary analysis." He on his part had independently conceived the whole plan of his first two volumes before he had even met with the important works of Spencer, Lazarus, Steinthal, and Oettingen; and he mentions that "A. Comte and his path-clearing colligation of Sociology (its matter and method) to Biology, alas! I have only after beginning to print learned to know in the original."<sup>1</sup> But the "'real analogies' of Biology, brought forward by Comte, Littré, Spencer, and newly and with special force by Paul von Lilienfeld," Dr Schäffle has "systematically followed out." Thus are books made large.

It is impossible, on a survey of the work, not to sympa-

<sup>1</sup> *Bau und Leben des Socialen Körpers*, i. (1875) Vorrede, S. v-vi.

thise with the respectful derision of M. Leroy Beaulieu;<sup>1</sup> though it is difficult to understand how M. Beaulieu can without misgiving bestow the praise he does on Mr Spencer, who formerly wrought out, albeit compendiously, the same analogy. The scheme is fatally fantastic, inasmuch as there is not a single detail in the whole process of comparison in which there are not profound disparities between the individual and the collective organism. The result is really rather an allegory than an analogy; and it is safe to say that, though the Patristic Comte and the Individualistic Spencer first developed the thesis in modern times, and though Schäffle's Socialistic conclusions<sup>2</sup> serve to counterpoise the Spencerian conclusion that biological analogy leads us to Individualism, open-minded readers who are invited on Schäffle's lines to accept the principle of State Socialism in politics may well decline to do so on such a form of argument. It is of course not a sufficient rebuttal of the method of biological analogy to point out that the three leading exponents of it, Comte, Spencer, and Schäffle, are utterly at variance in their results;<sup>3</sup> and that the same method might equally well be again employed to lead to the conclusions of Hobbes. But when we can say that it is thus shown *a posteriori* to have failed to lead to scientific agreement, and that it is *a priori* repugnant to right reason in respect of the profound differences between the genesis and the processes of the organism and the society, the method is at least sufficiently disentitled to rank as finally scientific.

In any case, it is clear that Schäffle has not any more than Comte or Spencer superseded the method and the work of Buckle. If Comte is unduly abstract, and Spencer unduly anatomical, much more so is the specialist who made it his business to be more abstract and more

<sup>1</sup> *The Modern State*, Eng. tr., p. 25.

<sup>2</sup> For these see his *Quintessence of Socialism*, as defined by his *Impossibility of Social Democracy*, both translated in the "Social Science Series."

<sup>3</sup> Cp. Professor Sidgwick, as cited above, p. 72.

anatomical than anybody else. As he himself would doubtless admit, though his method of exposition may be conclusive for some minds, it does not dispense with the concrete inductive and deductive study of social variation in history. Once more, then, we are entitled to decide that the latest specialism, as distinguished from the *obiter dicta* of critics, leaves Buckle unshaken in the status herebefore claimed for him.

I do not doubt that in the enormous mass of modern German specialist works, the very extent of which is such a serious obstacle to its utilisation, there may be many true suggestions and special contributions towards a concrete and positive sociology. I recall Zumpt's confirmation<sup>1</sup> of Buckle's account of German specialism in his remark that in Germany "the sublimest truths which are promulgated from the professional chair, die within the lecture-rooms of the universities, and produce no fruit." To the references already made to special German researches bearing on sociology may be added a mention on the one hand of the importance of such researches as those embodied in Ritter's great work on geography; and of the value of such anthropological collections as those of Waitz. On the other hand the theory of imitation<sup>2</sup> by which Gruppe has sought to explain the rise of religions, though a trifle extravagant, has an obvious bearing on general sociology; and indeed the whole science of psychology, which recent German research has done so much to develop, has such a bearing. But our business here is with the practical application of special forms of knowledge to the general explanation of social movement, and, save for the recent works of certain cosmopolitan living sociologists to be later dealt with, I have seen nothing of note in what of German special literature has come to my notice.

<sup>1</sup> Above cited, p. 351.

<sup>2</sup> Compare the references to Bagehot and M. Tarde in this chapter, § 10.

§ 6. *Minor French Sociologists.*

I. Since the great impulse given to sociology last century by Montesquieu and Voltaire, and Raynal and Diderot, there has never been any long interruption of the line of sociological writers in France. Even the reaction against the Revolution, specially embodied as it was in the tyrannous interference of Napoleon with the philosophic and critical writing of history, and the similar censorship of the Bourbon Restoration<sup>1</sup> was less effective for the suppression of such writing in France than in England. Under Napoleon's very eyes, the spirit of historical science declared itself with a new distinctness. "Two things only," wrote Toulangeon, a now forgotten historian, "render past events interesting,—their causes and their results;"<sup>2</sup> and the Institute offered a series of prizes for essays on such themes as the Influence of the Reformation (1802) and the Influence of the Crusades "on the civil liberty of the peoples of Europe, on their civilisation, on the progress of enlightenment, of commerce and of industry" (1806)—inquiries not calculated to leave men uncritical of the Empire. And when the vast drain of energy imposed by the Empire on France was over, just as in the previous century after the death of Louis XIV., there was a new burst of literary energy. At a time when, save for the laudable work of Hallam, there seemed no survival in literary England of the critical spirit which had inspired Gibbon, or of the disinterested research of the Scotch sociological school of Gibbon's day, new and energetic writers in France were putting new life into historiography.<sup>3</sup> Already in 1818, Augustin Thierry was reaching towards a new and really erudite study of French history; already in 1819, the Swiss-born Sismondi had produced his *Nou-*

<sup>1</sup> See the *Essais de Morale et de Critique* of Renan, p. 108.

<sup>2</sup> *Histoire de France depuis la Révolution*, iii., *préface*.

<sup>3</sup> Mill, writing in 1838, pronounced the French mind "the most active national mind in Europe at the present moment" (*Diss. and Disc.*, i. 287; cp. ii. 221).

*veaux Principes d'économie politique* (preceded in 1808 by his *De la richesse commerciale*), and already in 1827 Guizot, after producing his annotated edition of Gibbon, had published his *Essays on French History*, his *History of the English Revolution*, and was preparing his lectures on the *History of Civilisation in Europe and in France*; while Sismondi had produced his *Histoire des républiques italiennes* (1309-1318), and begun his *Histoire des Français* (1821-1842). Thierry, enamoured of the living colour of the past as preserved in the original records, and inspired to such interest perhaps by the writings of Fauriel, the investigator of the origins of the chivalrous epic, of Chateaubriand, and of Scott,<sup>1</sup> revolted alike against the dry-as-dust annal-writing of the historical compilers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and against the disdain with which the rationalising philosophers had treated the problem of national origins, and gave a new vividness to the actual narrative of the early national past, laying much stress on *race* as a historic force. Sismondi, writing learned histories on the one hand, on the other broke new ground in economic science, in which, like his British contemporary Lauderdale, he was far in advance of the science of his day.<sup>2</sup> Guizot, combining the spirit of the philosophic school<sup>3</sup>—well sprinkled with holy water—and the erudition of the new order of students, gave a new development to the historic interpretation of social movement. Alongside of these, Ortolan was reconstructing the history of Roman law, partly in the light of and partly in rectification of Niebuhr; Charles Comte was revising

<sup>1</sup> Renan, as cited, p. 110.

<sup>2</sup> See the author's *Fallacy of Saving*, pp. 28-40. Sismondi's *Fall of the Roman Empire* (1834), written like his abridged history of the *Italian Republics* for the English "Cabinet Cyclopædia," sets out with a luminous chapter in which the necessity and the difficulties of a social science are well set forth, before Auguste Comte had finished his *Philosophie Positive*.

<sup>3</sup> He owed much, in particular, to the lead of Mably, whose *Observations sur l'Histoire de France* he edited, with a supplementary volume of *Essais sur l'Histoire de France* by himself. He declares of Mably (pref. to *Essais*) that despite his errors, "no other writer has oftener cleared up or divined the truth." Cp. the praise of Buckle, ii. 236, 300.

the work of Montesquieu and Herder; and Quinet, after translating Herder, was framing a religious philosophy of history much more nearly in harmony with modern ideals and modern thought than the rigid orthodoxy of de Maistre and de Bonald. Such works as Thierry's *Conquête de l'Angleterre par les Normands* (1825), the first issue of his *Lettres sur l'Histoire de France* (1820), Guizot's *Histoire Générale de la Civilisation en Europe*, and *Histoire de la Civilisation en France* (1828-30), Charles Comte's *Traité de Législation* (1826), Sismondi's histories and economic treatises, and Ortolan's *Histoire de la Législation Romaine* (1827),<sup>1</sup> exhibits so complete a recovery of French intellectual energy after the Revolution and the Empire and the Restoration, that from these works alone might have been inferred the coming of new upheavals. And in view of such a movement of "positive" study of history, the movement towards theoretic social reconstruction, of which Fourier, Saint-Simon, and Comte are the outstanding figures, is seen to have been no matter of mere personal agitation, but a sequent outcome of the antecedents,—as much so as the "romantic" movement in literature, which is seen developing, from the initiative of Chateaubriand, in the same decades, and which figures so disproportionately in our literary surveys as beside the great movement of humanist science that embodied so much more of intellectual force.

II. The remarkable school<sup>2</sup> of Saint-Simon, so prominent and so notorious in its day, broke up (as was inevitable, looking to its medley of rationalism and revelationism) by way of internal schism;<sup>3</sup> and its lineal

<sup>1</sup> Michelet also had by 1828 produced his *Tableau chronologique de l'histoire moderne* (1825), his *Tableaux synchroniques* (1826), his translation from Vico, and his *Précis de l'histoire moderne* (1828).

<sup>2</sup> It is to be noted that this group contained several young men who later became individually famous—e.g., Augustin Thierry, Armand Carrel, and Michel Chevalier; and that it greatly influenced John Mill (*Autobiog.*, 163-167).

<sup>3</sup> Reybaud, *Études sur les Réformateurs Contemporains*, 1840, ch. ii., §§ 5, 6. Saint-Simon's dying announcement that immediately the "party of the workers" would be constituted, and that "the future is ours," coincides notably with the later predictions, equally vain, of Comte.

successor, that of Auguste Comte, whose sociology in itself we have separately scanned, has had as a political movement a similar fortune, though its adherents continue in their small numbers to constitute Comtist groups in France and England. The third of the movements under notice, that of Fourier, though in its day perhaps the most famous of all, has now only a semi-antiquarian interest, as a singular combination of critical sanity and constructive fantasy. Compared with the contemporary movement of Owen in England, which in some respects so closely resembled it, Fourierism is a striking illustration of the survival of metaphysical and apriori methods of thought in centralised France, alongside of the practicality developed in England by the free play of industrial competition. The extravagance of fantastic theory which arises in the later work of Comte is primordial in Fourier, who—with his “Theory of Four Movements,” his doctrine of “vibrations,” his theodicy, his system of astronomical analogy, his scheme of coördinated notes, passions, colours, mathematical processes, figures, and metals—seems as bent on alienating common-sense as Owen was on conciliating it. But Fourier really had at the same time, in a high degree, the merit of generality of view which has availed so much for the reputation of Comte; and no one has criticised more incisively than he the apriorisms of other people. His practical foundation as a commercial traveller, too, gave him some of the advantage which Owen had from his experience as a manufacturer; and he is at times as surprisingly practical as he is at other times astonishingly otherwise. This fact of the commercial preparation of the two reformers, Fourier and Owen, is sociologically significant; and the contemporaneous failure and disappearance of the two movements is no less instructive. Each attained to considerable popularity. Owen’s movement organised many thousands of intelligent workers in England; and Fourier’s was said to have in 1848, eleven years after his death, as many as 3,700 adherents,<sup>1</sup> while

<sup>1</sup> Gide, *Introd. to Œuvres Choisies* of Fourier, p. 1.

its influence in the United States was for a time remarkable. But where Owen's was undermined and dissipated by the rapid expansion of competitive industry in England, and the concurrent emigration, which relieved for the time the pressure that had given him so much of his power, Fourier's was broken-up in France in the anti-socialist and bourgeois reaction which practically established the Second Empire, while in the United States it fell away before the normal expansion of the nation and the all-disturbing issue of slavery. The narrower and less elastic boundaries of French industry brought the strife of classes and ideals to a crisis, where the English crisis was postponed by the new expansion. And in the one country as in the other, the old movement and the old ideas have partly served in the present generation as a soil for a new and more strictly economic socialism, disembarassed of Fourier's fantasies, and of his and Owen's particularism; a movement which again is likely to come to a head in France—haply with better fortune than before—sooner than in England, by reason again of the relative expansibility, but which appears destined in England also to force a reconstruction of society. The United States, again, may or may not reach the decisive stage of pressure later than England.

III. Alongside of such schools as those of Fourier and Comte, with their cut-and-dry schemes of a new society, the work of Guizot as a writer seems almost as conservative as his political activity. He too had his metaphysic, an incomplex Deism; and Sainte-Beuve has noted ironically his unlaborious explanations of historical events in terms of the volitions of Deity. Thus he fell short in scientific weight; and his political tactics revolted many liberals, as they did Mill.<sup>1</sup> Still his work remains to this day educative, and has served to set up general conceptions of historic movement among thousands of readers who could never have accepted those of Fourier and Comte. A generation before Buckle, he contemplated the task of

<sup>1</sup> Cp. the essay in the *Dissertations and Discussions*, vol. ii., with pp. 343-348. I recall an explicit condemnation of Guizot by Mill, but cannot trace it.



surveying all civilisation ; like Buckle, he recoiled from the too vast undertaking ; and like Buckle he took a patriotic pride in the special interest of his own country's history as a study in the movement of civilisation. For its time, his *History of French Civilisation* is a great performance ; and it doubtless availed much to the system-makers who aimed at more extensive generalisations.<sup>1</sup> He pointed out, as Kant had done, and as Comte did not, that strife and friction are conditions of progressive civilisation. But it only needs to compare his performance with Buckle's to see how much less penetrating is his sociological method, and to justify our classing him with the minor sociologists of the century. He is finally a political historian, albeit a most able one.

IV. It may be questioned, however, whether the classification—if it were offered as anything more than a convenience in grouping—could be equally justified in the case of Charles Comte, whose *Traité de Législation* may be suspected to have done more to inspire Buckle than the work of his more famous namesake. We have seen above<sup>2</sup> how its merit impresses even an antagonist bent on discrediting it ; and Buckle gave it emphatic praise.<sup>3</sup> Its title is somewhat of a misnomer ; and the work offers a curious contrast in method to that of Maine, in that Comte pays no heed to jurisprudence in a professed "Treatise of Legislation," but discusses only the conditions of genesis of forms of society, while Maine finds the key to the

<sup>1</sup> Guizot is specially to be credited with recognising the differentiation between ancient and modern civilisations, in respect of the relative simplicity and unity of the former and the complexity and strife of forces in the latter (*Hist. Gén. de la Civ. en Europe*, 2ième Leçon). But he failed to induce the general law that multiplication of contacts actually makes civilisation, inasmuch as he greatly exaggerated the unity of the ancient civilisations (Cp. Mill, *Diss. and Disc.*, ii. 235), and in particular he oddly failed to see that the relatively great complexity and disunity of Greek life differentiated it widely from, say, the Egyptian (though this had been in part noted and explained by Goguet, *Origine des Lois*, Epoque III., Liv. ii. ch. 2). Guizot seems, again, to have set agoing the thesis as to the gain to liberty of thought from the separation of the spiritual and temporal powers (*Id.*, 5ième Leçon), a thesis hard to reconcile with history. But see Mill as cited, p. 243.

<sup>2</sup> P. 225.

<sup>3</sup> I. 43, note.

genesis of forms of society in the remains of "Ancient Law." In matter as well as in method, Charles Comte's performance is still most valuable; and it is only its limitation to some of the preliminary problems of sociology, and its abstention from the field of modern history, that can account for its partial disappearance from notice,<sup>1</sup> or justify the relative curtness of the notice here given to it.

V. It would almost seem as if the very abundance and energy of sociological thought and discussion in France, no less than the dissipation and frustration of political energy in revolutions, has tended to check the assimilation of social philosophy by the nation as a whole. Looking at the strenuous and unflagging output of all manner of critical writing by France for over a hundred years, one thinks of her in Shakespeare's phrase as like

Some fierce thing replete with too much rage,  
Whose strength's abundance weakens his own heart.

After the system-framing group of Fourier, Saint-Simon, and Auguste Comte, the dismissed investigation of Charles Comte, the irrationalist Conservatism of de Maistre, and the semi-rationalist Conservatism of Guizot, we have the tempestuous figure of Proudhon, who raised so many problems and solved so few, and who, despite some wise counsels and many penetrating thoughts, seems to typify the present posture of French politics, where the lawless passion of the Anarchists goes so far to paralyse the remedial plans of the constructive reformers. Proudhon is indeed one of the least scientific, the least historically studious, of the considerable sociologists of the last fifty years. But it is relevant to cite him here as showing, in respect of his very considerable influence, the more and more pressing importance of the economic field in sociological discussion. If he failed to solve the riddle of his day, it was not for lack of strenuous effort; and he has let light and air into many a social dogma.

VI. It may be in a measure due to the stormy incon-

<sup>1</sup> It seems to be peculiarly little known in France.

clusiveness of Proudhon's whole work, as well as to the actual political conditions since 1870, that social science in France to-day, as apart from practical politics, is no longer marked off into schools bent on sweeping innovations. A new tone, or at least a newly attractive modulation of the note of conservatism, may be said to have entered into French political thought in the second generation of the century, in the works of M. de Tocqueville, a liberal-conservative who peaceably and systematically studied Democracy as an established political and social fact in the United States, giving on the whole a surprisingly favourable account of it; proceeding later to study the Old Régime of France in a similar fashion. The *Democracy in America* (1835-1840) is one of those classics of a generation<sup>1</sup> which by common consent are pronounced perfect, but quietly disappear from the reading of the generation which follows. With much of the philosophic temper, it had too much of immediate bearing on a changing problem to remain an authoritative treatise, even if its judgments had throughout been more trustworthy than they are. De Tocqueville belonged emphatically to the period midway between the turmoil of clashing political fanaticisms and the day of deliberate science. Thus he preserves in part, with Guizot, the phraseology of de Maistre and de Bonald, for the exposition of doctrines of progress and development which they detested. "God," he writes, "prepares for the societies of Europe a future more fixed and more calm; I know not his designs, but I shall not cease to believe in them because I cannot penetrate them; and I would rather doubt my enlightenment than his justice."<sup>2</sup> But his preliminary survey of the evolution of democracy in France, which he declares to be "providential," is strictly positive and rationalistic, errors apart;<sup>3</sup> and contributes new ideas

<sup>1</sup> Mill, reviewing it (1840), pronounced it "the first philosophical work ever written on Democracy" (*Diss. and Disc.*, ii. 3).

<sup>2</sup> *De la Démocratie en Amérique*, 2ième édit. Introd., i. 20.

<sup>3</sup> Like Guizot and Comte, he argues loosely as to the gains from the constitution of the Catholic Church, pointing (Introd., p. 5) to the equality of secular ranks in its priesthood as an influence tending to penetrate the secular govern-

to sociology, to which Buckle was clearly indebted. The consequences of the invention of gunpowder, the multiplication of social functions, the spread of commerce, discoveries in the arts and sciences, the social transmutations arising in times of peace, the development of literature, are all specified by him as real factors in the movement; and though he declares that his book was written "under the impression of a sort of religious terror produced in the author's mind by the view of this irresistible revolution, which marches for so many centuries back across all obstacles, and which is still seen advancing in the midst of the ruins which it has made,"<sup>1</sup> he none the less throws the ægis of pietism over the process, and pronounces it predestinate. His demand, too, is for science, though he insists on the ordinary conventions as to religion being the basis of all morals. "There is needed a new political science for an entirely new world."<sup>2</sup>

Later, he realised that the world he lived in was not so very new. In 1835 he asks: "In quitting the social state of our ancestors, in throwing pell-mell behind us their institutions, their ideas, and their moralities, what have we taken in their place?"<sup>3</sup> This was written, as he later revealed, on a very scanty knowledge of the past which he declared to have been so summarily dismissed. In 1853, when studying for his book on the *Ancien Régime*, he wrote that "this world which preceded the French Revolution is nearly as difficult to recover and to comprehend as the antediluvian epochs;"<sup>4</sup> and in the preface to the work itself he forgetfully declares that he had "always thought" that his countrymen had succeeded much less fully than they ment. But the argument might as well be applied to the army, which subordinates civil grades to its own system of ranks, as does the Catholic Church. And the Church, as a matter of fact, was organised on its present footing for a thousand years, both in Eastern and Western Europe, without doing anything to overthrow the principles of imperialism. The writers who follow de Tocqueville and Guizot seem to forget that slaves were often made priests in pagan antiquity.

<sup>1</sup> *Introd.*, p. 9.

<sup>2</sup> P. 11.

<sup>3</sup> P. 15.

<sup>4</sup> Cited in *Mrs Grote, a Sketch*, by Lady Eastlake, p. 135. Compare Mrs Grote's testimony (p. 140), that de Tocqueville was "not a great reader."

supposed, then and since, in their "singular enterprise" of parting from all their antecedents at the Revolution. "I was convinced that without knowing it they had retained from the old régime *most of* the sentiments, the habits, even the ideas by aid of which they had conducted the revolution which destroyed it." It is plain that de Tocqueville's own mind had been under the sway of partisan generalisations; and it is significant of the force of the reaction against the Revolution that such a mind could subsist till past middle age without rightly understanding what the Revolution was. The habit of loose generalisation affects even the value of his book on America,<sup>1</sup> not only in respect of its superficial endorsement of the principle of Two Chambers, no less superficially cited by Mr Arnold as decisive, but in respect of his comparisons between constitutions. Thus he lays it down<sup>2</sup> that in France the constitution is theoretically unchangeable, while in England a right to alter the constitution is recognised to vest in Parliament. And this contrast he justifies<sup>3</sup> by asking "what can be more immovable in principle than a political order founded on the natural order of hereditary succession?" as if the principle were not the same in England.

But what marks de Tocqueville most decisively as a transient authority is his attitude to the question of religious belief, which in his day was commonly disposed of in France as in England by making-believe that all scepticism was discredited, and one religion demonstrated to be true. As Burke asked, Who now reads Bolingbroke? de Tocqueville asked, Who now reads Diderot?<sup>4</sup> And he put his orthodoxy, not on any argument for the truth of his creed, but on the ground that "the complete experience which we have acquired in public life during sixty years has sufficed to disgust us with this dangerous literature." He had himself formerly spoken of those who, "in the name of

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Bryce, *The American Constitution*, 3rd ed., ii. 39, as to his complete miscalculation of the future of party spirit in the States. Cf. p. 331.

<sup>2</sup> 2ième édit. i., ch. vi. p. 167.

<sup>3</sup> Note L., p. 330.

<sup>4</sup> *L'Ancien Régime et la Révolution*, 2ième édit., p. 257.

progress, endeavouring to materialise man, seek to find the useful without considering the just, science away from beliefs, and well-being divorced from virtue."<sup>1</sup> He was now justifying just such a materialisation, standing for the apparently useful irrespective of truth ; separating official religion from belief, and well-being from intellectual honesty. Less than a generation served to confound his prudence and stultify his prediction. The new Empire,<sup>2</sup> with its official orthodoxy, crumbled inwardly to ruin and fell by its own policy ; and the intelligence of France to-day is further from de Tocqueville's creed than ever before.

It concerns us here, however, to note how the ostensibly reasoned and even democratic Conservatism of de Tocqueville, proceeding as it did on judicial surveys of the aristocratic past and the democratic present, must have told strongly against innovating social doctrines under the Second Empire, when, with growing material prosperity, the people were reminded that prosperity had likewise been on the increase before the Revolution.<sup>3</sup> The knowledge that increasing well-being had made men more prone to revolution is itself something of a preventive of revolution. The Empire, further, by its policy of public works, really promoted industry ; and its vices in other directions were the more easily tolerated. The only reformatory doctrine with any personal weight behind it was that of the peaceable Le Play, who was getting the ear of the Emperor when the crash came. It was thus left to the new Republic to develop its sociology for itself.

VII. What has happened since 1870 is an energetic but sober and studious cultivation of exact knowledge, rather than a production of new social philosophies. The students in sociology, besides their original research, have paid close heed to the anthropological work done in England, the historical work done in Germany, and the new analytical

<sup>1</sup> *Démocratie en Amérique*, Introd., i. 19-20.

<sup>2</sup> *L'Ancien Régime* was published in 1856.

<sup>3</sup> *L'Ancien Régime*, Liv. iii. ch. 4.

inquiries proceeding in Italy. The credit for exact learning which France has never lacked since the seventeenth century, stands to-day, perhaps, higher than ever. But the revival may be said to be typified by a writer who made his mark thirty years ago, the lamented Fustel de Coulanges, the author of *La Cité Antique*. There were indeed throughout the Empire many scholarly and able writers on sociological history: the writings of Mr Lecky owe much, for instance, to such works as the *Histoire de l'Esclavage* of Wallon (1847), the *Histoire des Idées Morales dans l'Antiquité* of Denis (1856), the *Moralistes de l'Empire Romain* of M. Martha (1865), and other products of original research; the learning of Renan is not disputed by any of those who oppugn him; and he was but one of a number of learned French investigators of antiquity. But in *La Cité Antique* we have an investigation which stands out pre-eminently by reason at once of the range of its learning and the originality with which its learning is employed. It is a much more learned and a distinctly more original work than Maine's "Ancient Law," and it is not more open than that to revision. Looking to its general freshness of insight, however, it is surprisingly weak just where it comes nearest to living issues, namely, in its closing chapter, which deals with the effects of Christianity on ancient society. That is almost entirely a repetition of current conventional dicta, without any independent critical investigation. I may here repeat the conclusion of a criticism I have passed elsewhere<sup>1</sup> on the chapter in question:—"Men who have not to some extent specialised in the Christian beginnings are almost sure to be misled by the long consensus of uncritical orthodoxy, loudly enforced as it still is by the mob of ecclesiastical writers. Just as of old the philosophers were slow to shake off pre-philosophic religious notions and methods even after they had abandoned the popular creed, so to-day the innovators in sociology accept one set of ancient generalisations even while they are overthrowing others. The

<sup>1</sup> *National Reformer*, July 6, 1890.

trouble is that the historic bias can only be cured by a strenuous resistance on the part of those who see its falsity, and such resistance necessarily implies a falling short of the perfectly dispassionate spirit of the ideal historian and the ideal critic. Those who come after us will be able to hold the balances more tranquilly than we, who have to fight daily with those who systematically weight one of the scales. But at least we are making possible the exacter discrimination of the future." It is perhaps not unwarrantable to surmise that had M. de Coulanges returned in mature life to the theme he had so superficially handled in his youth, he would have set forth some very different conclusions. His motto in later years was *Quaero*; and his whole intellectual development was towards an ever greater keenness of scrutiny into conventional views, old and new. His unfinished *Histoire des Institutions Politiques* is admittedly one of the most masterly as well as one of the most learned works of its kind in existence; while his essay on the *Origin of Property in Land*<sup>1</sup> is a peculiarly skilful criticism of theories which, urged by modern German specialists, have been somewhat lightly accepted by those of other countries. It is interesting to note that in the introduction to his *L'Allee*<sup>2</sup> he writes:—"Of late years people have invented the word *sociology*. The word *history* had the same sense, and meant the same thing, at least for those who understood it. *History* is the science of social facts; that is to say, it is *sociology* itself." It may be permitted to us respectfully to say that, great as was the historic range of M. de Coulanges, sociology involves even a wider survey than his, though no sociologist can possibly work all over the field with the thoroughness of the author of the *Histoire des Institutions Politiques*. Above all, it must involve an economic study which he did not attempt. There cannot be too much historical analysis, by good analysts; but we

<sup>1</sup> Eng. trans. in "Social Science Series," with introd. by Prof. W. J. Ashley, 1892.

<sup>2</sup> Cited by Prof. Ashley, p. xii.



need above all things the generalising thought which brings the results of analysis into coherence for the instruction of men in general, and for the comprehension of history not as a past, but as a going process. The historic work of M. de Coulanges is great ; but the sociology which shall assimilate it is still to come, though a comprehensive sociology too is now arising in Europe, and as such claims our notice.

VIII. Before, however, we pass from the category of the modern French writers whose relation to sociology is partial rather than general, we must pause over the names of the two leading French men of letters—poets and novelists apart—of the past generation, Taine and Renan. Two such vivacious minds could not but touch often and actively on present-day social problems ; indeed the bulk of the work of both partakes of the nature of sociological history. Still, neither had arrived at a social science ; and of the divers-natured Renan we may say that he could never have reached one. There was in his intelligence a fatality of self-contradiction which makes his whole product a series of tergiversations. It is out of the question to trace here how the process affects his treatment of Christian origins ;<sup>1</sup> but it may be pertinent to note how, quite early in his career, dealing with a simple concrete impression, he gives two absolutely opposed judgments on a point of sociological fact. In his essay on M. de Sacy and the Liberal School,<sup>2</sup> he lays it down that the Terror had “decapitated France,” and so produced “the unheard-of abasement of characters which is seen in the last years of the eighteenth and the first of the nineteenth century.” “The society which proceeded immediately from the revolution was servile because all intellectual aristocracy had disappeared. . . . Such is not the condition of our own time.” Yet in the same essay, a few pages further on,<sup>3</sup> he remarks that “it seems to me that the men I have known

<sup>1</sup> See, who will, a criticism in the *National Reformer*, October 9 and 16, 1892.

<sup>2</sup> *Essais de Morale et de Critique*, ed. 1860, pp. 4, 5.

<sup>3</sup> Pp. 14, 15.

in my youth had an originality of physiognomy and a piquancy of character which we do not find to-day." And of those men of his youth he goes on to exclaim: "what freshness! what firmness! what self-esteem! what austerity of character!" And again:<sup>1</sup> "Shall we find in the men of the new times more of dignity, of nobility, of intellectual culture, of respect for their own opinions, of firmness against the seductions of riches and power?" The men so praised are precisely those of the generation which just before we had seen described as abased and servile. It is plain that we are dealing with a mind somehow flawed in its structure, subject to uncontrollable and unmeasured veerings of mood, a weathercock of impressions, incapable of steady consistency or coördination. Such a mind could contribute to social counsel only a kaleidoscopic series of views, always picturesque, never trustworthy; and such are Renan's allocutions. His mind could not "stay put." His service to knowledge, however, is still great. It is that of a manifold treasure of easily borne erudition, from which other men may draw surer fruits, and of an amenity of temper and personality which is perhaps as rare and as valuable as sound social science.

IX. In Taine we have a very different spirit. At first sight, his keen and sinewy intelligence seems to possess every disciplinary gift which Renan's lacks. With all the national energy and brilliancy of speech, with an impressibility which is a perpetual stimulus, he has traversed certain fields of history, ostensibly holding aloft a steady light of consistent method, coördinating knowledge and creating science; and his results in all fields remain to challenge the study of his successors, refusing to be ignored. Yet it may confidently be observed that the method itself, so far as it is really employed, is imperfectly scientific; and that Taine's most considerable performance lacks all appropriate method. The method associated with his name is well known: it consists in examining literary and social history in the light of three factors: "the race,

<sup>1</sup> P. 29.

the environment, the moment." Without going into the question of the obvious imparity of such factors—the illegitimacy of making "the moment" a primary force instead of a resultant—we may summarily say that the conception of "race" is quite intractable to sound scientific service. Taine's adoption of it really represents a step backward in historical science. Michelet, writing in 1866 the preface to a new edition of his *Histoire Romaine*, could tell how in his *Histoire de France* he had detached himself from Thierry, for whom he had such esteem, on the question of race as a historic factor. "The element of race on which Thierry insisted is more and more secondary, more and more subordinated to the work of transformation which every society performs upon itself." "Fatalism of race, and legendary fatalism of providential great men—two snares of history—I have shunned them equally."<sup>1</sup> Michelet, it may be, did not himself reach pure science, but at least he was progressing towards it. Taine on the contrary employs the thesis of race with a temerity and laxity<sup>2</sup> which will go far to shake his authority when his work comes to be rigorously criticised. Applied to present problems, it clearly led him to quite superficial conclusions. Thus in his Notes on England, remarking on the aversion of the English workers to State help and their preference for voluntary combination, as against the insistence of the French workers on State regulation, he has the effect of making the difference one of inherent race bias.<sup>3</sup> Yet we can easily see to-day that it was only one of relative stage of industrial development. The industry of France being more circumscribed by reason of the fundamental economic conditions, the workers have sooner felt the limits of free

<sup>1</sup> *Histoire Romaine*, ed. 1876, pp. vii.-viii.

<sup>2</sup> E.g., his assumptions as to a generic "Gallic" character, on the basis partly of French manners and partly of old English phrases about the Welsh and Irish (*La Fontaine et ses Fables*, 7ième édit., p. 14). This view slumps all sections of the French stock, including the Norman, into one imaginary primary type. Compare the criticism of Émile Hennequin, *La Critique Scientifique*, 1888, pp. 93-128.

<sup>3</sup> *Notes sur l'Angleterre*, 2ième édit., p. 313.

expansion, and therefore have sooner demanded a general industrial organisation. Those of England at the time of Taine's visit were facing a prospect of indefinite expansion, and therefore made no such demand, feeling that they could regulate their own affairs on competitive principles. To-day the English workers, finding the limits of industry no longer elastic, are in turn demanding State regulation, as those of Germany had done before them, and as those of the United States will do after them. There is no special racial element in the case.

It follows then that Taine's political prescriptions, proceeding as they do in part on such fallacious assumptions, have no plenary authority. He developed, indeed, into a somewhat commonplace Spencerian Conservative, exhibiting all Mr Spencer's lothness to realise that past miscarriages of democratic effort are no disproof of the capacity of societies to rule themselves on sympathetic principles. Thus he eagerly translated Mr Spencer's "The Man *versus* the State;"<sup>1</sup> and thus his history of the Revolution; with its merely sceptical method, has become a text-book of reaction.<sup>2</sup> He partly failed to learn the sociological lesson involved in the Darwinian formula of the struggle for existence, and so partly failed to keep himself in the full current of modern science; even his great work on "Intelligence" exhibiting reactionary tendencies.<sup>3</sup> But when all is said, he does thus but illustrate that general penalty and burden of human thought, the failure of so many ideas and reasoning processes to maintain themselves in the struggle of the intellectual life, which is the psychological side of the doctrine of evolution. His was a great intelligence, and where he compels resistance he stimulates it with his own energy of brain.

<sup>1</sup> See Leroy-Beaulieu, *The Modern State*, Eng. tr., p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Cp. the author's *Introduction to Modern English Politics*, in the *Free Review*, November 1894, § 1.

<sup>3</sup> See the criticism of M. André Lefevre, *La Renaissance du Matérialisme*, 1881, pp. 381-399.

§ 7. *Minor English Sociologists since Buckle.*

As against the view that Buckle has had "no followers," it would perhaps not be far wrong to say, looking to the testimony of Mill<sup>1</sup> as to the effect of Buckle's example, that Buckle's book has given more general stimulus to sociological thought in this country in the past generation than any other, with the possible exception of the writings of Mr Spencer, who in turn had his audience in large part prepared for him by Buckle. Certain it is that from 1860 there dates a considerable fresh development of sociological literature over and above the writings of Mr Spencer and Maine; and if, for reasons indicated in the Introduction to this volume, little admission of Buckle's merit has all the while come from the literary class, his share in creating the intellectual movement is none the less real. If we jot down a list of the English writers who since Buckle have done sociological work of a kind, we shall see, I think, either that their work complements and consists with his, or that if they attack him they fail, or that they are proceeding on his lines.

I. To begin with Mr Bagehot, whom we have found<sup>2</sup> culpably misrepresenting Buckle, it is pretty clear that his "Physics and Politics" owes a large part of its stimulation to the "Introduction to the History of Civilisation in England." So far as it is sound, it consists mainly in a special analysis of factors in early society before the stage at which Buckle takes it up, or in an intelligent but somewhat superficial and essayish reflection on phases of later society. For the rest, with all its perverting anxiety to avoid being compromised by the philosophy of Buckle, the book is now badly compromised by the philosophy of Maine. It adopts without a grain of misgiving his doctrine that "history catches man as he emerges from the patriarchal state;"<sup>3</sup> though it goes on, curiously enough, to dispute the relative antiquity of the polity based on blood kinship;<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Above, p. 269.

<sup>3</sup> *Physics and Politics*, p. 15.

<sup>2</sup> Above, p. 34.

<sup>4</sup> P. 23.

and it is entirely warped by Maine's assumption (contradicted by him later)<sup>1</sup> as to the extreme rarity of progress.<sup>2</sup> A false premiss on this head affects the validity even of Bagehot's development of the force of "imitation," though his reasoning on that theme has merit. If he had but carried it further, and recognised that the "imitation" which keeps some societies unprogressive is only one side of the spirit of imitation which has a directly contrary effect when it proceeds upon new and foreign example, he would have greatly deepened his sociology. As it is, his exposition has the general fault of all his reasoning, the lack of a ground principle, the habit of epigrammatising on the spur of the moment. Thus we are told in one chapter that "A successful national character is but the successful parish character; just as the national speech is but the successful parish dialect";<sup>3</sup> and in the next that "No nation admits of an abstract definition; all nations are beings of many qualities and many sides."<sup>4</sup> Into this snare of neat generalisation Bagehot falls again and again. Thus he is delighted with Jowett's phrase about the classical religions bearing relics of "the ages before morality," pronouncing it to be "only one of several cases in which that great thinker has proved by a chance expression that he had exhausted impending controversies years before they arrived."<sup>5</sup> This is extravagant enough, in all conscience. What truth lies behind Jowett's phrase applies equally to the Christian religion: separated from that application, and put as a general principle, it merely darkens counsel as to human evolution. At his worst, Bagehot's love of phrasing leads him into mere formal verbiage, as: "The ages of monotony had their use, for they trained men for ages in which they need not be monotonous"; "the ages of isolation had their use, for they trained men for ages when they were not to be isolated."<sup>6</sup> And to the last, with all his intermittent insight, he never arrived at a scientific general view of the con-

<sup>1</sup> See above, pp. 405, 406, 413.

<sup>2</sup> Bagehot, pp. 100, 211.

<sup>3</sup> P. 37.

<sup>4</sup> P. 61.

<sup>5</sup> P. 116.

<sup>6</sup> Pp. 30, 40.

ditions of progress, falling back rather on obscurantist phrases about the "delicate principle of progress" being shrouded in the "coarse fibre of other qualities."<sup>1</sup> Thus there is finally no scientific weight whatever in his fling at Buckle's method :

"There is an odd idea that those who take what is called a 'scientific view' of history need rate lightly the influence of individual character. It would be as reasonable to say that those who take a scientific view of Nature need think little of the influence of the sun."<sup>2</sup>

That is to say, "character" in history is the primary source of all action and all institutions. To reason thus is simply to miss the business and the problem of sociology altogether. Bagehot gives his book the sub-title of "Thoughts on the Application of the Principles of 'Natural Selection' and 'Inheritance' to Political Society." On his own showing he has done no such thing : for if character be to society as the sun to organic life, there can be no criteria of natural selection and inheritance at all.

Bagehot, in fine, can only have the praise that is due to the suggestive and discursive essayist, writing rather as an impressionist artist than as a scientific student of things, and often laying down facile fallacy for sifted truth. But as a suggestor and stimulator his merit is high ; and he has, in addition, the advantage of a gift of easy and limpid style, which will count for much to his fame.

II. The next figure that catches the eye among our minor or secondary sociologists is that of Mr W. E. H. Lecky, whose "History of the Rise and Influence of the Spirit of Rationalism in Europe," "History of European Morals from Augustus to Charlemagne," and "History of England in the Eighteenth Century," make up the most considerable body of sociological history produced by any living English writer. And here, at least, there is no question of hostility to Buckle, for Mr Lecky, as we have seen,<sup>3</sup> has paid the highest tribute to Buckle's greatness. The great merit of his books, indeed, is to follow Buckle's concrete illustrative method, and to trace in Buckle's

<sup>1</sup> P. 63.

<sup>2</sup> P. 96.

<sup>3</sup> Above, p. 277.

fashion, with a breadth of knowledge worthy of his undertaking, the course and development of historic phases of opinion and conduct. If only he had maintained Buckle's standard of consistency, still more if he had improved on Buckle in respect of scientific exactitude, he might to-day rank with him as a thinker and as a teacher. All of his works, however, indicate a certain fitfulness of scientific comprehension; his treatment of early Christian social history in particular is vacillating and contradictory to a distressing degree; and his habit of identifying rational ethics with "Christian ethics,"<sup>1</sup> as if Christian ethics were not properly the ethics of the Christian dogmatic system, is sufficiently misleading. His own researches show clearly enough in detail that it is sceptical criticism that has developed what to-day figures as Christian ethics; yet he chronically relapses into the theological view that some primary essence in "Christianity" has originated rational ethics. Thus he is capable of describing "the love of truth and the diffusion of liberty" as essentially Christian conceptions, in the face of the fact that Christianity went far to destroy the very germs of both ideals, and did for long suppress them. Mr Lecky, in fact, illustrates strikingly the effect on so many English writers of the past generation, of an early grounding in theological habits of thought, and of an imperfect deliverance from them. It is to be feared that this group of half-scientific rationalists, which may be said to include Mr Lecky, Mr John Morley, Mr Leslie Stephen, Mr Bagehot, Mr Greg, Mr Arnold, and the English Positivists, will not possess in the next generation the relative credit they have enjoyed in the past. Their work needs to be done over again, more consistently and more critically; and their writings, save for their varying literary attraction, will be apt to share the fate of intermediate types. But in the meantime they fulfil an important function; and no dissatisfaction with the inconsistencies of Mr Lecky, or the shortcomings of Mr Arnold, or the gratuitous hostility of Mr Stephen and Mr Morley

<sup>1</sup> *Rationalism in Europe*, new ed., i. 170.



to the performance of Buckle, should be allowed to blind us to the fact that these writers one and all have in some degree promoted the rationalist principle and temper as against the theological principle and temper, and thus furthered the intellectual movement which Buckle sought so energetically to advance.

III. It may seem somewhat disrespectful to John Stuart Mill to class him with the "Minor Sociologists," especially as Buckle himself regarded him with the very highest admiration. But on a survey of Mill's whole sociological writings—the *Political Economy*, the concluding books of the *System of Logic*, the "*Liberty*," the volume on Comte, the writings on Government and the Subjection of Women, and the sociological articles in the *Dissertations and Discussions*—it does not appear that Mill formulated anything like a sociological system;<sup>1</sup> though his whole activity was a constant and valuable stimulus to sociological thinking. I have dealt generally elsewhere<sup>2</sup> with his individuality and his teaching: here it must suffice me to say that his great merit as a sociologist lay in his separate vindications of liberal principles and of the scientific spirit, rather than in his philosophic attitude to the problem. A score of rash and untenable judgments, often self-contradicted, on matters of social philosophy, exhibit him as far too much swayed by varying moods, his own or another's, and far too little given to critically comparing and checking them. His way of thought was too much determined by cast of mind, by the intellectual climate of his youth, by the deductive genius of his powerful father, to permit of his developing habits of strictly positive thought on historical phenomena; though it is going too far to say, as does Roscher,<sup>3</sup> that

<sup>1</sup> Professor Bain tells that he entertained a project of executing "a work on Sociology as a whole"; but the project collapsed in a singular fashion, through Mill's conscious failure to shape to any purpose his notion of an "Ethology," or science of character, which was to be the foundation of his sociological scheme. ( *J. S. Mill*, pp. 78-79; cf. p. 46, note, as to his similar failure with regard to the sociology of Rome.)

<sup>2</sup> In *Modern Humanists*.

<sup>3</sup> Cited by Ingram, *History of Political Economy*, p. 150.

he "was not a historical head." His recoil from his father's Radicalism to the really more deductive and unhistorical method of Burke, as developed by Coleridge, was merely a swing of the temperamental pendulum, and did not represent a transition from unscientific to scientific method. Thus we have him laying down in the *Logic*, as his deliverance on the general sociological problem, that ethology, the science of character, is "the immediate foundation of the Social Science,"<sup>1</sup> though he had before expressly stated that ethology is "still to be created."<sup>2</sup> And though his sections on the Method of the Social Science contain much just and instructive reasoning, it is hard to ascribe logical value to the doctrine that "it is an imperative rule never to introduce any generalisation from history into the social science unless sufficient grounds can be pointed for it in human nature."<sup>3</sup> If we really see a general fact in history, there can be small difficulty about finding grounds for it in human nature: the danger is clearly that we shall in the old fashion set up categories of tendency in human nature which have merely a verbal correspondence to the facts. The passage would seem to have been written partly under the influence of his original deductive habit of thought and partly under that of Comte, whom Mill at the time of writing held (inaccurately, as I have above suggested<sup>4</sup>) to have looked on social science as "essentially consisting of generalisations from history verified, *not originally suggested*, by deduction from the laws of human nature."<sup>5</sup> Mill argued that this did not go far enough; that the generalisation might be made by way of Direct Deduction. But in another pas-

<sup>1</sup> B. vi., ch. ix. § 5.

<sup>2</sup> B. vi., ch. iv. § 6.

<sup>3</sup> B. vi., ch. x. § 4. *Cp.* the *Dissertations and Discussions*, i. 112: "History is not the foundation, but the *verification*, of the social science: it corroborates, and often suggests, political truths, but cannot prove them." Here the contrast between verification and proof is hard to follow. In any case, it seems to have been written before Mill read the *Philosophie Positive* (see Professor Bain, *J. S. Mill*, p. 70, and the *Autobiography*, p. 209). On the same point, compare the *Diss. and Disc.*, ii. 5 and 223.

<sup>4</sup> *P.* 373, *note*.

<sup>5</sup> B. vi., ch. ix. § 1.

sage<sup>1</sup> added to the later editions, he is moved to protest that Comte above all writers has abused the method of deduction from supposed laws of human nature, setting up as ultimate facts a number of mental peculiarities produced by circumstances. The fact that he needed thus to protest is a sufficient argument against his original prescription, and is a sufficient justification of the method which Buckle followed where Comte did not.

For the rest, Mill's influence on sociological thought remains as powerful as it is manifold ; and it is pertinent to remember that alike by much of his special reasoning on Sociological Method and by his generous direct testimony he gives the weight of his name and his philosophy to the vindication of Buckle against the lesser critics who have volunteered a contrary verdict.

IV. A writer who certainly belongs to the literature of sociology, but who is apparently bent on avoiding the appearance of science in his work, next claims attention. Professor Mahaffy has done so much to make Greek history freshly fascinating to English readers that it must seem ungrateful to depreciate him on such a ground ; but it is hardly possible to read him without the feeling that he has missed a great opportunity. The titles of his principal books—"Social Life in Ancient Greece" (1874), "Greek Life and Thought" (1887), "Greece under Roman Sway" (1890), "History of Greek Literature"—are indeed unpretentious, and certainly realise all they promise, save in so far as the name "History" sets up an expectation of a study of causes. But it remains something of an anomaly that in an age so increasingly bent on social science, so accomplished a scholar and so versatile a critic should be content to treat such problems without striving after a philosophy of his subject-matter. The explanation would seem to be that what philosophy Professor Mahaffy has is in large measure anti-scientific ;<sup>2</sup> and that this is so

<sup>1</sup> B. vi., ch. iv. § 4 (also cited above, p. 374, *note*).

<sup>2</sup> See his and Dr Bernard's *Kant's Kritik of the Pure Reason Explained and Defended* (1889).

because his mind lacks consistency in its processes. Such at least is the conclusion forced upon us by much of the matter in—*e.g.* his "Social Life in Ancient Greece." I have elsewhere<sup>1</sup> dealt with his political and general self-contradictions, and will here cite only a few salient samples. In the chapter on "Attic Culture" in the "Social Life," he writes:<sup>2</sup>—

"An authority so great as Mr Freeman says, and in my opinion rightly, that the average *intelligence* of the assembled Athenian citizens was higher than that of our House of Commons ;"

and the proposition is justified in detail, one of the proofs being that every Athenian citizen "enjoyed the contemplation of the highest art," and that all were exercised "in awarding the prizes for tragedies and comedies." In the chapter on "Social Aspects of Greek Art," referring to the view of other writers "that the whole [Greek] nation was so exceptionally gifted, that the occurrence of the highest genius was merely the accident of a slight difference in degree among intellects all superior to those of other men," he comments<sup>3</sup> :—

"This is one of those twaddling theories about the Greeks which have been frequently opposed in the present volume. Nothing can be more false than to assert that the Greek public was made up of great intellects, and perfectly educated in the fine arts. *The Greek public had its asinine qualities predominant like every other public.*"

Such self-confutation as this implies a deep-seated defect of judgment, a chronic rift in mental continuity. Perhaps the most startling illustration of it in the same book is the contrast between, on the one hand, the claims made in the eighth chapter for Christian versus Pagan humanity and the reasoning in support of them ; and, on the other, the admissions made in the next chapter as to the superiority of Pagan over Christian humanity. The first passage<sup>4</sup> deserves to be quoted and pilloried :—

"I know that in the Middle Ages refined and cultivated men sanctioned great atrocities, and even witnessed voluntarily hideous

<sup>1</sup> *National Reformer*, June 12, 1892.

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*, p. 439.

<sup>2</sup> Third ed., p. 255.

<sup>4</sup> *Id.*, p. 237.

tortures as well as executions. I know that Roman Popes ordered wholesale massacres. *But they did it not through defect in the love of men, but through excess in the love of God, and perhaps of human souls.* Theology had expelled ordinary humanity from their hearts, in order to instal in its place theological humanity. . . . These cases are therefore not parallel to the inhumanity of the Greeks. *There is no excuse for their barbarity.* It is but one evidence out of a thousand that, hitherto in the world's history, no culture, no education, no political training, has been able to rival the *mature and ultimate effects of Christianity in humanising society.*"

We seem to be listening to a Jesuit with his tongue in his cheek. But in the next chapter we have the sophist, in another mood, comparing the grave and merciful decency of the execution of Socrates with the bestial and hideous methods of modern Christendom, with the comment: "There is, I think, in all Greek literature no scene which ought to make us more ashamed of our boasted Christian culture."<sup>1</sup> "Were not the old Greeks vastly superior?"<sup>2</sup> Dr Mahaffy is never tedious; but one does grow impatient over these infantine veerings and reversals of generalisation. Either let us be spared comment and generalisation altogether, or let them be decently consistent. After reading dozens of such self-stultifications—for Dr Mahaffy's books are full of them—one decides that his titles of "Rev." and "D.D."—albeit they are withdrawn from his later title-pages—are fatally significant. Not that his perversities are consistently Christian: on the contrary, he is always drawing spurious contrasts between Christian races, in the most commonplace spirit of race prejudice, just as he spasmodically exalts "Christianity" as against Paganism. It is that his emotionalism is all of a piece: that his is the intelligence of impulse, uncorrected by general principles, incapable indeed of reaching general principles. If there is one point on which a Doctor of Divinity, a master of Greek, might be expected to have a steadfast opinion, it is the relation of Greece to the development of Christianity. Yet we find Dr Mahaffy putting forth two flatly opposite views on the subject. In his "Rambles and

<sup>1</sup> Third ed., p. 265.

<sup>2</sup> P. 268.

Studies in Greece,"<sup>1</sup> he lays down the thesis that Christianity never really absorbed Greece, and he cites with admiration a long passage in which Renan argues that Greek orthodoxy of old as to-day consists in practices and external signs; that "this *oriental* Christianity" has "no tears, no prayers, no interior compunction;" that the Greeks are "a superficial race, taking life as a thing with nothing supernatural, with no under-purpose;" that they could not appreciate "profound seriousness, simple honesty, devotion without glory, goodness without emphasis," and so on, and so on.<sup>2</sup> It would be easy to cite from Renan passages in which all this is contradicted; in which the Greek religion is shown to be the *reverse* of the Oriental; in which the Latin type—here represented as deeply emotional—is exhibited as hard and formal; in which the Jewish religion is shown to be unspiritual. But it specially concerns us to note how Dr Mahaffy, thus endorsing Renan in one book, scouts him in another. In his latest work on Greek History, he protests that "there has seldom been a plausible statement circulated which is further from the truth" than Renan's account of the predominance of the Jewish spirit in historic Christianity.<sup>3</sup> Of the doctrines of Paul—"the doctrine of justification by faith; of the greater importance of dogma than of practice; of the predestination or election of those that will be saved"—he now declares that "this whole way of thinking . . . was quite familiar to the most serious school of Hellenism, to the Stoic theory of life popular all over the Hellenistic world, and especially at Tarsus, where Saint Paul received his education."<sup>4</sup> And this proposition in turn is energetically developed, as it well might be, after the performance of Havet. But what shall we say of the cast of mind, the intellectual code, of a writer who can thus take sides alternately for the two sides of a contradiction? What is the moral value of his verdict on any sociological issue? It is edifying to remember how Renan and Dr Mahaffy alike

<sup>1</sup> Fourth ed., p. 128.

<sup>2</sup> See Renan's *Saint Paul*, pp. 202-208.

<sup>3</sup> *Problems in Greek History*, 1894, p. 201.

<sup>4</sup> Pp. 202-203.

have gone through life dealing out judgment on races, creeds, policies, ideals, when all the while their own minds were mere kaleidoscopes of transient and irreconcilable impressions. On the practical side, it is a datum never to be forgotten that men who are chronically ready to impugn democracy for its lack of science and stability are thus so commonly found to be themselves incurably unstable, to the deepest stratum of their natures, being consistent only in resistance to popular ideals. If only they could bethink them that democracy must needs have its collective share in the faults of human nature, and that if grave fallibility be a sufficient ground for suspending its experiments, the same plea should avail to suppress their own literary activity—if they could but thus mingle a little thorough-going self-criticism with their facile censure of humanity in the mass, we should have been spared many glib jeremiads and much refined clap-trap over contemporary politics.

V. It is not to be pretended, however, that sympathy with democracy, even when joined to wide knowledge, suffices to make a man a masterly sociologist. I have above avowed my inability to credit the democrat Freeman with much more philosophic capacity than the Carlylean Froude, though Freeman's service to historiography is great in respect of the mere range of his erudition and his habit of comparing the phenomena of different societies and ages, however superficially. And a similarly modified praise must be accorded to Professor Thorold Rogers, who, strong on the economic side of history, found Freeman there so incomplete.<sup>1</sup> In addition to his massive and valuable work on the History of Prices, he has left us two large volumes of lectures on the "Economic Interpretation of History" (1888), and on the "Industrial and Commercial History of England" (1892). These exemplify afresh the extent of his historical knowledge; but it will probably be granted by most students that the bulk of the narrative and commentary is out of all proportion to the amount of new generalisation which the two volumes yield. Rogers' mind was in

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 104, *note*.

fact only partially scientific. In the department of strict economics he is independent without being masterly ; and his sociology is at best an intermittent protest against previous generalisations, unfortified by generalisations fitted to reduce them. Neither is his short *History of Holland* a satisfying interpretation of a problem which ought to have a peculiar interest for all historically-minded economists. Such interpretation, however, is perhaps too much to ask from a volume of a popular historic series. In the case of Rogers, in fine, as in those of so many voluminous and intelligent writers on social questions, we have to be grateful for masses of laboriously sifted and valuable information, reflecting that the generalising genius is rarer than that of the scholar.

VI. The present brief survey will not, I hope, be pronounced negligent if it does not attempt detailed estimates of the work of a number of recent writers who have done solid service to social science without attempting a comprehensive sociology. The masterly performance of Mr Tylor, for instance, is by implication set aside as a study in anthropology ;<sup>1</sup> and the writings of Professor Müller, Sir George Cox, Mr Lang, Mr Frazer, and the late Professor Robertson Smith, are on similar principles to be classed under *Hierology* and *Anthropology*, as being indirectly and not directly sociological. On the other hand, a truly sociological history either of the Jews or of Judaism, or of Christianity as a system, is not yet forthcoming in England, and is only partially supplied from the Continent. In recent years as in the earlier part of the century, the most magistral English works touching on sociology are systems of economics, with the exception of the works of Mr Spencer, which are lacking on the side of economic analysis. The "Principles" of Professor Marshall, of Professor Sidgwick, and of Professor Nicholson, are sufficient evidence that there has been no such subversion of economic system and no such disappearance of economic capacity as some declare to have taken place among us ;

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 379.



though those who say that the economics of the chairs is not abreast of the social problem are, I think, so far unanswerable.<sup>1</sup> In any case, these are only in part sociological treatises. The "Elements of Politics" of Professor Sidgwick, again, though more strictly so describable, is rather a discussion of the grounds of political action in ethics and expediency than a study of political evolution; and can only be here noticed as an excellent embodiment of its author's gifts of judicial and discriminating thought on issues rarely discussed with such amenity and sobriety.<sup>2</sup> A little book of remarkable originality and freshness, the essay of Mr Horace Seal "On the Nature of State Interference,"<sup>3</sup> deserves more notice than it has received for its ingenious argument, on express grounds of natural science, against the principle of *laissez-faire*. Mr Seal undertakes to set up, in opposition, a "Comparative Zoological Sociology," by which it is shown that National "interference" is likely to be much less harmful than the mass of the private interference that is always going on. This is, of course, a process of scientific logic rather than a historical demonstration. To the brilliant work of Mr D. G. Ritchie on "The Principles of State Interference" I have already referred,<sup>4</sup> with a caveat against its overstraining of the case against Mr Spencer; and of the same author's able work on "Natural Rights" I will only add that it seems to me an unfortunate expenditure of mental energy in the support of an unprofitable ethical thesis.<sup>5</sup> As to an author whom Mr Ritchie rather frequently cites with much generosity of praise, the late Sir James Fitzjames Stephen, it may fairly be said that his book on "Liberty, Equality, Frater-

<sup>1</sup> See Mr J. A. Hobson's *Evolution of Modern Capitalism* (1894) for a good indication of the new criticism of economic orthodoxy.

<sup>2</sup> I may refer to a critical notice of the work in the *National Reformer*, Dec. 27, 1891.

<sup>3</sup> Williams & Norgate, 1893.

<sup>4</sup> Above p. 384, *note*. In my criticism there referred to there are some comments on the political philosophy of the late Professor Green.

<sup>5</sup> This topic again is discussed at some length in the *National Reformer*, Nov. 29 and Dec. 6, 1891, apropos of a paper read on the subject by Mr Ritchie to the Fabian Society.

nity," has ceased from troubling the waters of political discussion.<sup>1</sup> On other grounds it is unnecessary here to offer an estimate of Mr Seebohm's original and important work on "The English Village Community," that being a contribution to the archæology of our subject which in no way raises any of the Bucklean issues dealt with in this volume. The same is to be said of many other scholarly and praiseworthy investigations.

VII. The total effect of our survey, then, is to show that there has really been no English writer of Buckle's day who even grapples afresh with his subject-matter in such a way as to supersede him. The only book to be compared with his in scope and aim is that of Dr Draper, noticed at the introduction to this volume as coinciding so noticeably with Buckle on some fundamental points. It has done such excellent service that only with an accompanying tribute of praise can I remark on its one vital sociological error—that of endorsing the old delusion that States as such have their necessary cycle of infancy, youth, maturity, decay, and death, like individual organisms.<sup>2</sup> The fallacy of this view, which dates from classic antiquity, was exposed as long ago as last century, by Volney among others; and I can only explain Professor Draper's acceptance of it as an outcome of the American habit of regarding European and Asiatic States as "old" and more or less "effete," though the civilisation of the United States is practically as old as that of England, of which it is an extension. In any case, the doctrine is a false empirical generalisation, framed to account in terms of a normal organic process for social phenomena which in no way correspond to the normal processes of organisms, those of collapse of States before military violence, and those of stoppage of upward progress in States which nevertheless subsist. A little reflection will shew that the theorem of "functional growth and death" of States is irreconcilable

<sup>1</sup> It is criticised on some points in a lecture on "Equality" in the author's *Discourses on Life and Letters* (Forder).

<sup>2</sup> *Intellectual Development of Europe*, ed. 1875, i. 13-20; ii. 393-398.

with Dr Draper's own preliminary theses as to the conditions under which States arise, and that it stultifies his own practical propaganda, which assumes an indefinite possibility of genesis in civilisation. The growth-and-death formula, in fine, is an illicit way of anticipating and excluding the very process of analysis of conditions in which true sociology consists.<sup>1</sup>

It cannot be on this ground, however, that Dr Draper's work is as far as possible ignored by the educational powers that be. This fallacy is only repugnant to the reigning orthodoxy in so far as it consistently puts Christian civilisations on the same footing as Pagan. The cause of hostility to him is that, like Buckle,—though, also like Buckle, himself a Theist—he has assailed the whole current religious conception of history. In this respect, of course, his work is on all fours with all sociology worthy of the name. In the line of English economists and sociologists, from Smith and Hume to Spencer and Lecky, we are dealing almost invariably with either Deists or agnostics. Bentham, the Mills, Ricardo, M'Culloch, Grote, were about as rationalistic in principle as Mr Spencer and Mr Huxley; and we have seen that even among the writers who have disparaged Buckle, a number, such as Mr Morley and Mr Leslie Stephen, are themselves "sceptics," as the phrase goes. But the books which straightforwardly and stedfastly assail ecclesiasticism and pietism are naturally much more boycotted than those which only intermittently do so; and, as we have seen, Mr Morley and Mr Stephen do much to propitiate orthodoxy. None the less, they tend to undermine it, and we may reasonably conclude that all this formation of non-theological opinion will tend to set up among us in the coming years a state of thought in which the rationalistic temper will be a matter of course, and the theistic as extinct among scientific men as the polytheistic.

VIII. There is no need to modify this view in respect of

<sup>1</sup> Cp. *Introduction to Modern English Politics*, in *Free Review*, Nov. 1894, pp. 166, 175, 183.

the recent appearance and noticeable popularity of a work which attempts to discredit all rationalism, the "Social Evolution" of Mr Benjamin Kidd. The vogue of that work, as of Mr Henry Drummond's "Natural Law in the Spiritual World," simply represents the conscious need among the more cultured orthodox to find some means of justifying themselves against rational criticism. Such books are at once clutched at by the clerical class as new weapons against "unbelief," and are pressed by them on the attention of their more educated adherents. The result is, in the cases in question, a laurelling of philosophic incompetence by philosophic ignorance, inasmuch as any tolerably logical reader can show the books to be muddles of fallacy and self-confutation,<sup>1</sup> and any tolerably well-read person can recognise in the later an unknowing reiteration of sophisms common to all religions in all ages. The Jesuine doctrine as to "babes and sucklings," the "*non in dialectica*" of Ambrose, the anti-rationalism of Savonarola and of Luther, the emotionalism of Rousseau, and even in part the transcendentalism of Kant—all these are phases of the primitive fallacy which Mr Kidd laboriously sets himself to establish. It only needs to notice its inevitable self-destructiveness, in order to dismiss it as a transient polemic. Mr Kidd's central doctrine is that the force of progress in human affairs is an ultra- or supra-rational impulse, seen in all religion and in the blind spread of population; and that when nations take to reasoning on their conduct, and guiding themselves by utility, they begin to decay. If it be so, Mr Kidd has cut the bough he sits on, for his book, fallacy-filled as it is, purports to be a process of persuasive reasoning, and an exposition of utilities. He recurs often to the complaint that there is at present really no social science; and it may be at once conceded that his reading does not include what there is;

<sup>1</sup> I have elsewhere analysed both: Mr Drummond's in an article entitled *Dogma in Masquerade*, in the *Westminster Review*, 1885; Mr Kidd's in an article on *Inverted Sociology* in the *Free Review*, June 1894, and later in *Sociological Notes*, *Id.*, April 1895.

but he effects his own final discomfiture by the simple device of deciding intermittently that "the deep-seated instincts of society have a truer scientific basis than our current science."<sup>1</sup> This being so, we may in the name of criticism decide with Professor Sidgwick<sup>2</sup> that Mr Kidd leaves social science where he found it—if the latter part of the clause be a permissible form of speech in his case.

IX. A more respectful attitude is enforced by the somewhat remarkable work of the late Mr C. H. Pearson, inappropriately entitled "National Character." That is in part a really scientific attempt to forecast some developments of civilisation, in respect of the probable advance in power and culture of some of the races at present pronounced "inferior." The recent military developments of Japan go far to justify some of Mr Pearson's suggestions. But his book is nevertheless not abreast of modern sociological science in that (*a*) it assumes "decay" very much in the spirit of the old theorem above discussed, though Mr Pearson's own earlier historic researches, as set forth in his meritorious "History of England in the Early and Middle Ages" (1867) and his monograph on "English History in the Fourteenth Century" (1876) might very well have shown him that the current conception of decay as a result of mere old age in a nation is an utter delusion; and in that (*b*) it proceeds by way of upsetting its own doctrine as to the probable progress of the Yellow Races. Mr Pearson's temperament seems to have been fundamentally despondent, inasmuch as he regards the forecasted progress of the inferior races as somehow a form of human retrogression, inasmuch as it may correlate with a withdrawal of the white races from regions in which they admittedly do not thrive.<sup>3</sup> This sub-logical sentiment affects the soundness of many of Mr Pearson's deliverances, resting though they do on wide knowledge and much

<sup>1</sup> *Social Evolution*, p. 113 and *passim*.

<sup>2</sup> *National Review*, Dec. 1894, p. 575.

<sup>3</sup> See the author's criticism, entitled "A Sighing Sociologist," in the *National Reformer*, March 5, 12, and 19, 1893.

reflection. In fine, his work, which is perhaps the nearest approach since Buckle, in England, to the concrete, inductive, and deductive treatment of the actual movement of civilisation, is emphatically the weaker for its failure to assimilate his method and his results, remaining as it does in large measure tentative, sentimental, and semi-scientific, for lack of the recognition that a genuine social science was already begun. His one reference to Buckle, I think, is his remark, with regard to the "Introduction" and Maine's "Ancient Law," that Buckle's was the greatest triumph at the moment, and Maine's has been incomparably the more enduring."<sup>1</sup> I have attempted above to show the significance of Maine's "duration," as against the similar eulogies of other critics; and to indicate the reasons for surmising that Buckle's influence has the greater future before it. A study of Mr Pearson's work does but strengthen that surmise.

X. Space forbids, finally, more than a passing reference to a few works of a sociological character, in one or two of which some of Buckle's positions are criticised from a more or less orthodox standpoint. One of these is Mr Staniland Wake's "Chapters on Man" (1868), of the fourth chapter of which I had proposed to make a criticism, in respect of its discussion of Buckle. Since, however, the chapter concludes with an unconscious but complete surrender of the position Mr Wake set out to maintain against Buckle on the subject of "race," it may here suffice to note that fact. To the criticism in Mr Beattie Crozier's "Civilisation and Progress," again, it seems unnecessary to reply, seeing that Mr Crozier offers practically no argument in support of his objection that Buckle does not recognise the force of the factor of religion in progress, and that he attempts no historic demonstration of his own. Despite his emphatic claims to originality, Mr Crozier's formula of the "four main factors of civilisation"—(1) Religion, (2) Material and Social Conditions, (3) Religion in its Character as Philosophy, (4) Science Physical and Mental<sup>2</sup>—really

<sup>1</sup> *National Life and Character*, 1893, p. 309.

<sup>2</sup> *Civilisation and Progress*, 3rd ed., p. 412.

advances no original view ; and he supplies no new or valid evidence for his propositions on religion. Of the vivacious work of the Duke of Argyll on "The Unseen Foundations of Society," finally, it may be noted that in so far as it insists on the sociological dangers of a low standard of food consumption, it is an unexpected ratification of one of the main theses of Buckle ; and, for the rest, that what appears to be the Duke's definition of his "foundations"—"a system of settled and stable jurisprudence with an honest and a firm executive—the paramount reign of law in all the relations of men"<sup>1</sup>—partakes of the nature of a platitude.

### § 8. *Le Play.*

While the experience of the past fifty years has gone far in France to discount sweeping systems of social change, it has permitted of a considerable vogue for the teaching of one sociologist who, instead of proposing to reorganise society on new principles, urges a return to certain principles of the past. The influence of the late M. le Play, it is probable, has already passed its zenith ; and it must surely die out as regards his philosophy of history and of society ; but it has been considerable enough to call for some separate notice here. He may be said to represent, as truly as St Simon and Fourier and Comte, the survival, among Frenchmen of energetic character, of the spirit of regimentation and egotistic ascendancy which French history has in a special degree encouraged. Unlike those named, M. le Play was orthodox in his religion ; but he compares closely with them in his peculiarly personal attitude to the problems he deals with, and in his strong desire to make his mere personal equation or predilection a rule for all society. And like them he the more obviously belongs to the past in that he could not frame a sociology without saddling it with a religion, his religious teaching being indeed the most primitive of all.

<sup>1</sup> *The Unseen Foundations of Society*, p. 435.

Though M. le Play has been a voluminous writer, his sociological teaching may be readily summarised. It is, in brief, to the effect that:

1. All social well-being depends upon religion.
2. Religion and experience alike teach us to regard the family as the true social unit.
3. To maintain the family in its proper condition, there needs (*a*) religious conviction, (*b*) family property, (*c*) complete liberty of bequest for the father of the family, and therefore abolition of the system of equal inheritance, (*d*) complete abolition of divorce.
4. There must be no Socialism; but the utmost possible promotion of harmony between masters and men.

Looked-at in connection with his career, the social doctrine of M. le Play is seen to be the expression of his very strong prepossessions, rooted in a character well adapted for the work of actual industrial organisation, but practically devoid of speculative capacity. He seems at all times in his long life to have impressed men in public and private alike with his benevolence and his practical capacity.<sup>1</sup> A mining engineer and chemist, he travelled much in every quarter of the globe, and everywhere he closely observed the actual lives of men, making minute and conscientious records of all he learned. This is his real service to sociology, his *Ouvriers Européens* being a valuable collection of monographs of actual lives of working families, with their budgets minutely specified. The work in itself, indeed, speaks of a particularising and not a generalising brain. What original power of generalisation M. le Play had, lay in his great aptitudes for personal management: for the rest, he simply adopted, in virtue of his innate love of peace and order, the old-world conception of a graded society, checked only by his practical perception of the harm wrought by intolerance on the part of the Church. It has been protested that he is wrongly described when he is called "the Catholic Economist";

<sup>1</sup> See a good biographical sketch of him by Mr H. Higgs in the *Quarterly Journal of Economics* (Boston), July 1890.



and the protest is just, inasmuch as he distinctly disapproved of many of the Church's methods. None the less, he is *the* pietist social reformer of his day; his adherents have been for the most part Catholics; and the Pope might well eulogise him at his death. Naturally his more enlightened admirers seek to make out that his religion is rather one of morals than one of dogma; but this is a glossing of the facts. The religious side of Le Play's sociology would indeed be beneath serious discussion were it not that he makes it the foundation of the whole; and puts his system forward in its very latest form as primarily an attack on modern "scepticism." "We combat above all three plagues (*flaux*): the scepticism preached in our language by the encyclopedists, with the collaboration of Frederick II. and the favour of the German sovereigns; the shameful errors propagated by a contemporary German literature; and finally the habits of violence created by the governments of Louis XIV. and the Terror."<sup>1</sup> And as it is only in terms of his pietism that he offers any general view of the movement of civilisation at all, it is necessary to consider what that view is worth. It is by way of a deliberate summary of human history that he writes:—

"The methodic study of European societies has taught me that individual happiness and public prosperity are in proportion to the energy and the purity of religious convictions. I do not fear to affirm that every observer who recommences this study according to the rules of method, that is to say with a spirit freed of every preconceived idea, will be conducted by the evidence of facts to the same conclusion. The inquiries into the past made with the concurrence (*concours*) of competent historians, all lead to this result. In all ages of history, from the prosperities of ancient Egypt to those of Christendom, it has been remarked that the people penetrated with the firmest beliefs in God and in a future life are always raised rapidly above others by virtue and talent, as by power and riches."<sup>2</sup>

It will suffice to compare this precious generalisation with the main relative facts in order to see with what

<sup>1</sup> *La Réforme Sociale en France*, préf. de la 4<sup>ème</sup> édit., p. xvi.

<sup>2</sup> *La Réforme Sociale*, Liv. i., ch. 9, § i.

sedulously cultivated ignorance it is framed. It is plain that whereas most sceptics do of necessity come to their conclusions in the teeth of their preconceived ideas, M. le Play has never been able to get outside his. The facts are all dead against him. Ancient Egypt, to which express reference is made, was indeed the typical religious State of antiquity; and nowhere before or since has the belief in a God and in a future life been more consummately developed for social purposes. Yet (to say nothing of "virtue") the Egyptians were speedily and easily excelled in all manner of "talent" by the Greeks, so much less religious in comparison; and after a long history in which the successive conquests can with difficulty be counted, we find them overrun in turn by Cambyzes, by Alexander, by the Romans, by the Saracens, and by the Turks. So far was their religion from promoting their talent that it is now decisively settled that their sculpture was at its best in remote antiquity, some 3000 years B.C., and that the effect of organised religion on their art was to stereotype and paralyse it till it ceased to be worthy of the name. All the while, the lot of the mass of the people can be confidently inferred to have been one of toil and poverty. Next to the Egyptians in religiosity come the Persians and the Jews, of whom the latter, at the very period when their monotheism and their belief in a future state reached their strongest development, were utterly destroyed as a nation, and scattered over the face of the earth, where they are now seen to prosper at least as much without religious belief as with it. And the ancient Persian civilisation had no better fortune, succumbing as it did to one conquest after another like that of Egypt.

In Christendom the lesson is the same. Abyssinia, Christianised early, has made no progress whatever. The pious Romanised Britons, like the Christian Italians, were overrun by heathen Teutons; who in turn, when grown devoutly religious, were in England and elsewhere conquered by Normans with at least no greater faith in God and immortality. Christian Syria, Egypt, Africa, and

Spain, seem to have been duly orthodox when overrun by the Saracens ; and there is no record of any scepticism in the Byzantium which, after a thousand years of piously unprogressive Christianity, fell before the Turks, who, albeit devoutly faithful in their turn, do not seem to thrive on their piety. Nor was it unbelief that weakened the Moors in turn before the Christian Goths in Spain. Their civilisation was at its highest when they leant most to scepticism ; and in decadence they have been faithful unto intellectual death. Italy in turn reached her highest pitch of riches and splendour in a time of much weakened faith ; and failed to regain them after the fullest reëstablishment of the regimen of faith ; even as Spain, great and strong while she had still heretics to destroy, sank to impotence when she had none left. In northern Europe, the main facts are not otherwise. The piety of nine-tenths of Russia is as unquestionable as the poverty. Nowhere in his travels can M. le Play have met with more untroubled religious conviction, and more general "virtue" in his sense of the term, than in Ireland ; and seldom can he have seen more general and more abject poverty. Protestants, sociologising as inexpensively as M. le Play, set down that poverty to Catholicism. But if they will but turn their attention to the domestic history of Bible-loving Scotland, they will find that only in the last century, after two hundred years of unmitigated religiosity, did the renaissance of Scottish talent and prosperity set in, well nigh simultaneously with the advent of deism and scepticism from England and France, and the rise of the spirit of "moderatism" even among the clergy. As for the "virtue" attendant on creed, perhaps the less said the better. The most specifically religious movements in Christian history, the Crusades, were stained by every form of wickedness and ferocity, as well as stamped from first to last with complete political incompetence.

Even in Asia the main facts are the same. Even M. le Play would hardly venture to assert in the concrete that the English who overran India were more devout than those

they overthrew, or that the Japanese of to-day are either more believing or less prosperous than the Chinese. The truth is, he made no such scientific study of history as he talked of. Gravely appealing to all men to look to facts instead of disputing over theories, he had in these matters no facts whatever to proceed upon. As the Arabs say, the eye cannot see when the mind is blind. As we have seen, he charges on contemporary Germany one of the three great plagues of civilisation; but when he elsewhere avers that decadence is caused by "oblivion of the law of God," it never occurs to him to show that Germany is in a state of decadence. His sole evidence for his sweeping account of religious history is a semi-sincere platitude from Montesquieu.<sup>1</sup> He can never have read a critical discussion of the subject by an instructed rationalist.

As his exposition proceeds, it grows more and more pathetically childish. "However," he goes on, "when after twenty-five years of researches I have wished to set forth the facts which have imposed this conclusion upon me, I have found myself in presence of two difficulties. *These only exist for a French writer.*" The difficulties in question are (1) scepticism, and (2) the divisions of Catholics. For M. le Play, "scepticism" is a kind of zymosis, or rather an acquired diathesis, not to be got rid of by religious argument, being in itself fatal to the reception thereof. "Scepticism" is for him not a set of mistaken convictions or theses, which must fall before logic, but a trouble which was first brought into France by Bolingbroke, and is to be driven out God knows how. As he can forget the wars of the Leagues and of the Fronde, and make himself believe that "violence" came in with Louis XIV. and the Terror, so he can forget Montaigne and Charron and Descartes, and make himself believe that scepticism is a foreign malady—that is, if he ever carried his studies to the points in question at all. It is, indeed, hard to guess where he has sought his information. "To become competent in the matter of religion," he declares, "it does not suffice to

<sup>1</sup> *Esprit des Lois*, Liv. xxiv. ch. 2.

study oysters and monkeys ; it is necessary, above all, to devote oneself to the study of human societies."<sup>1</sup> If he found anti-Christian views founded on the phenomena of oysters in Bolingbroke or Voltaire or d'Holbach or Dupuis or Volney or Leconte de Lisle or Havet or Guyot, he did ill to omit to cite the passages. As for the suggestion that the divisions among French Catholics make unbelievers, and constitute an unique difficulty for the apologist, it is hard to conceive how it can have from a widely-travelled man. There are, and have been, far more divisions among English Protestants than among French Catholics ; it was England, by his own account, that first infected France with unbelief ; and it is England that has produced the all-unhinging Darwin ; yet England was for M. le Play almost a model of polity and piety. His dialectic is, in fact, on a level with the apologetics of the British religious tract : it is reasonably to be described, in the terminology of Sir Henry Maine, as exhibiting "a state of downright imbecility," albeit M. le Play was even more confident about Genesis than Sir Henry himself, going so far as to defend it against the cavils of geology.<sup>2</sup> It would appear that no amount of practical scientific training can avail to drive orthodox delusion out of the mind of some men of tenacious sentiment, who were not rationally taught in youth.

M. le Play's general philosophy of history, then, is naught : the marvel is that in these days such reasoning could be put forth by a travelled and studious man, bred to scientific pursuits ; above all, in such a centre of rational thought as France. It is clear that what hold he has on the esteem of thinking men must be in virtue of other elements in his teaching, in conjunction with the impression made by his upright and stable character. And in point of fact he can be seen to have acquired his status by his appeal to the troubled spirit of France to return to ways of concord, and by his grave insistence that the path to be

<sup>1</sup> *La Réforme Sociale*, Liv. i. ch. 9, § v. (vol. i. p. 111, 5ième édit.).

<sup>2</sup> In his *Constitution Essentielle de l'Humanité* (1881), however, he seems partly to accept the nebular hypothesis.

followed is that which he maps out. He has had his measure of influence, as Saint Simon and Fourier and Comte had theirs, in virtue of the craving of members of a disturbed society for some system which promises to unify clashing opinions, and cure the divisions of the State. Such teachers, in such a society, make converts, as the third Napoleon made partisans, of the people to whom social dispeace is the most distressing of evils; and it is intelligible that Le Play, with all his primeval pietism, even propitiated some non-pietists by his evidently sincere protest against all forms of intolerance, small as would be the security for freedom of thought in a society in which, as under the rule of the Jesuits in Paraguay, the conditions of happiness would be "restricted to a continuance in the state of infancy."<sup>1</sup> The pleadings of Le Play for social peace are indeed arresting to any heedful ear; and it is not surprising to learn from him that whereas formerly the adhesions to his "Union of Social Peace" (nominally founded on the Decalogue!) had been counted by hundreds, they mounted to thousands after the war of 1870 and the long agony of the Commune.<sup>2</sup> He had the sympathetic adhesion of friends of France in all countries; and on the strength of the perfectly just tribute paid by some of his correspondents to the "elasticity" of France, he came to the conclusion that his country was really unique in that respect, and proceeded, in the fashion of Comte and Hugo, to count on the sure recovery of French "moral ascendancy" over the rest of the world.

But it is one thing to unite certain thousands of people in a "Union of Social Peace" after a spell of frightful strife, and another thing to impose a new social system on a nation; and it is safe to say that however Le Play may have succeeded in founding a school of partially practical students in the Catholic camp, he has entirely failed to recommend his ideal of polity to the French people. His main proposal, the subversion of the principle of equal

<sup>1</sup> Comte Alexis de Saint-Priest, *Fall of the Jesuits*, Eng. tr., p. 5.

<sup>2</sup> *La Réforme Sociale*, préf. 4ième édit. (1872), p. xiii.

inheritance by according an unlimited power of bequest to the paterfamilias, goes right in the teeth of the chosen French practice of a hundred years ; and it has all along been viewed askance even by some of his supporters.<sup>1</sup> And if the question is to be tested by experience, the arguments for his plan are weak as beside those for the current practice. Le Play's social ideal, in fact, is of a piece with his traditional pietism : he cannot see, either with the German Kant and Humboldt or with the English Mill, that the way to civilisation and virtue is through the play of individual aspiration, controlled not by patriarchal and immemorial custom<sup>2</sup> but by the mutuality involved in democracy. His social cures are distinctly of the sort that are worse than the disease. To maintain the eternal "family," he would re-enact inequality before the law ; and to prevent mercenary marriages he would make the daughter's inheritance less than the son's—as if the value of economic independence to women, even in the stage of inherited property, were not far greater than the harm of "calculated" marriages. To the same end he would deny divorce ; though the compared experience of France, Britain, and the United States has clearly shown that where there is most facility of divorce<sup>3</sup> there has been, in the past, the nearest approach to monogyny. Thus he would refuse freedom where freedom is the path to higher individuation and therefore to higher civilisation ; and he would equally refuse systematic State control where, on economic grounds, such control is argued for as the best way of securing individual freedom and individuation in essentials. With all his real benevolence and his administrative capacity, he has not been fortunate in his prescriptions for mankind.

<sup>1</sup> M. Cochin indicates his misgivings in his *Résumé Critique of La Réforme Sociale*, 1865, p. 35.

<sup>2</sup> "La réforme se trouvera," he writes, "non dans de nouvelles lois écrites, mais dans l'abolition de celles qui empêchent le libre retour à la Coutume."—*La Réforme*, préf. cited, p. xiii.

<sup>3</sup> Catholic Ireland is to be excepted as a mainly agricultural society. The other three are typically city-dwelling societies.

It is to be noted, however, that on some important points of sociological theory M. le Play has been scientifically right as against conventional fallacy. Despite his pardonable patriotisms, he had learned from his manifold intercourse with mankind that there is no necessary cycle of progress and decay for any nation, and that "race" is no determining factor in any civilisation. "The nations are not inevitably predestinated either to progress or to decadence," is the title of one of his chapters;<sup>1</sup> "the vices of the race can be reformed by law and by morals," is the title of the next. If these truths can but be brought home by his means to minds which still see in theology the solution of the problems of destiny, he may so far counter-vail the disservice of his failure to see that "law" and "morals" must follow the forward path of science through the conflict of aspirations if they are to avail for social stability. And seeing how year by year his pietistic conception of history grows less and less possible for the majority of instructed men, we may be content to wish well to his school, believing that its survival will be in terms of its pursuit of his practical method of inquiry, and not of its adhesion to his grotesque philosophy. He was a patient toiler and an unselfish schemer; and his personality is a promise of what philanthropy may be when the "Age of Reason" shall have really come.

#### § 9. *Letourneau and the French précis-writers.*

It is significant of the direction of instructed opinion that the most considerable living sociologist in France, as in England, is a representative rationalist. M. Letourneau is one of a group of scientific Frenchmen who, since the war, have laboured to collect and diffuse exact knowledge among their countrymen as thoroughly as it has been done in any other nation; and his series of volumes is perhaps the most orderly existing compilation of facts relevant

<sup>1</sup> *La Réforme Sociale*, Introd., ch. 4.



to sociology. His "Sociology based on Ethnography," being professedly only "the ethnographical chapter," has been followed up by a series of special studies of social development—"Evolution of Morality" (1886), "Evolution of Marriage and the Family" (1888), "Evolution of Property" (1889), "Political Evolution in the different Human Races" (1890), "Juridical Evolution in the Different Human Races" (1894)—a perfect encyclopedia of facts. But against M. Letourneau, as already hinted, there lies the criticism we have brought against Mr Spencer: he is a social anatomist or morphologist rather than a physiologist; a student of social statics rather than of social dynamics; a collector of all manner of historic details rather than an interpreter of historical movement. He is not of those who find interesting only the causes and results of events: he supplies, as it were, a *catalogue raisonné* of the varieties of human institutions, arranged ethnographically and chronologically. In view of his later works, therefore, his early volume on "Sociology" is somewhat misnamed, for it largely consists of briefer surveys of the subjects dealt with at length in his later volumes; and it is in no exact sense "the ethnographical chapter" as distinct from these, which are equally ethnographical in method. The whole collection indeed may be defined as a body of what Mr Spencer calls "Descriptive Sociology"; and where Mr Spencer offers us "Principles of Sociology" over and above the description, and yet fails to supply principles that either explain or forecast social movement, M. Letourneau, as we have seen, deprecates even the attempt to reach principles. Unless then we renounce that purpose of interpretation with which Buckle set out, we cannot say of M. Letourneau that he supplies more than the materials of sociology, or even that he supplies all of these; for his survey, like Mr Spencer's, takes account mainly of the ancient and the lower civilisations and of the uncivilised races; whereas, if Sociology is to be a science of society, its main business must surely be with the more highly evolved societies, whose intensity and complexity of life is

so much greater. One of the most valuable chapters in his works, indeed, is that on "The Phases of Political Evolution."<sup>1</sup> Here we have a real seizure of society in movement, very much on the lines of Mr Spencer's section on "Political Institutions"; and it may be surmised that in the one case in which both writers attempt an exposition of social movement, the later has been stimulated by the other. But despite M. Letourneau's critical attitude towards Mr Spencer, he does not any more than he supply a sociology of modern life. M. Letourneau does, it is true, at the close of his work on Sociology,<sup>2</sup> point very clearly to the need for a social science, remarking that individualism has its "fearful plagues," and that "retrogression is quite possible" if they be not cured; and in the same way, at the close of his work on Political Evolution,<sup>3</sup> he repudiates emphatically the Administrative Nihilism of Mr Spencer, and is thus a force for social reconstruction; but his conclusions, like Mr Spencer's own, are not a result of induction and deduction from the comprehensive study of the history and life of existing societies, but an expression of personal bias appended to an investigation which does not get that length. Like Mr Spencer, he is no economist, though economics is plainly the central element in the sociology of modern industrial societies; and when he goes about to repel Mr Spencer's veto on governmental action, he can only offer arguments from the point of view of his own profession of medicine, and bad arguments at that.<sup>4</sup> He does not really meet the individualistic thesis, and is thus not so weighty a voice on the other side as would be a sociologist of the historical as distinguished from the

<sup>1</sup> *L'Evolution Politique dans les diverses races humaines* (1890), ch. xx.

<sup>2</sup> Eng. trans., p. 594.

<sup>3</sup> *L'Evolution Politique*, ch. xx. § 2.

<sup>4</sup> M. Letourneau gravely discusses the smallpox epidemic of 1870 as a matter (at Paris) of the deaths of thousands of unvaccinated "mobile" Bretons, when it is pretty well established that more vaccinated than unvaccinated persons perished all over Europe. The fashion in which physicians systematically seek to suppress the facts of the mortality of vaccinated persons from smallpox is one of the minor difficulties of social science.

"anthropological" school. It was one of Buckle's criticisms of the thought of his own day, that the English Association for the Promotion of Social Science so-called never came within sight of science.

"Where Science begins," he wrote, "the Association leaves off. All science is composed either of physical laws or of mental laws : and as the actions of men are determined by both, the only way of founding Social Science is to investigate each class of laws by itself, and then, after computing their separate results, co-ordinate the whole into a single study, by verifying them. This is the only process by which highly complicated phenomena can be disentangled ; but the Association did not catch a glimpse of it. Indeed they reversed the proper order, and proceeded from the concrete to the abstract, instead of from the abstract to the concrete. The reason of this error may be easily explained. The leading members of the Association, being mostly politicians, followed the habits of their profession . . ."<sup>1</sup>

This passage is somewhat summary ; and the veto on induction from concrete to abstract, which is irreconcilable with much of Buckle's own procedure, speaks of a momentary swing round to the attitude of Comte. The whole passage is notable, indeed, for its insistence on what Buckle is so often accused of missing—the multiplicity of causes in social movement ; and the argument that causes cannot be traced from effects, inasmuch as many causes counteract each other, is ingenious ; but it is not sound. Counteraction itself is a concrete fact or nothing : if the process cannot be indicated, the assertion of its occurrence is plainly on a precarious footing. It would seem as if Buckle had been led by distaste for the mere empiricism of the Social Science people to pronounce against necessary empirical processes. Even the definition, "all science is composed either of physical laws or of mental laws," is unduly rigid ; for a science must be held to include knowledge of the facts it classifies and explains ; and as Hume said,<sup>2</sup> orderly arrangement is a considerable part of every science. But it remains true that mere classification of facts without specification of law is science in a very imperfect form ;

<sup>1</sup> Essay on *Mill on Liberty*, Fraser's Magazine, May 1859, p. 516.

<sup>2</sup> Above, p. 315.

and Buckle's protest holds good to the extent of pronouncing the sociology of Dr Letourneau imperfect, however thoroughly constructed so far as it goes. It has co-ordinated great masses of facts without arriving at their laws of variation.

But this, doubtless, Dr Letourneau would admit, in terms of his preface to his "Sociology"; and he may well claim that he has laid the bases for a constructive or dynamic sociology that may escape the *à priori* errors into which Buckle and Spencer and Comte, and all the other prescribing or didactic sociologists, have thus far fallen. On that view there need be no dispute. It is only necessary to remember that Buckle really supplied masses of data not otherwise collected, and of a kind very hard to colligate, in addition to laying down principles of action, or rather of non-action; and that for these data he supplied in large measure the right principles of interpretation.

Of historic data posterior in order of time to Dr Letourneau's, there is one valuable French collection—the *Histoire de la Civilisation en France* of M. Rambaud. This is in its way an admirable synthesis of the latest results of research in French history, the whole being woven into an intelligent and lucid narrative, constituting perhaps the most instructive history of France yet written. But this in turn leaves the work of the sociological interpreter still to be done. It is in fact one of the many recent French works which mutely repudiate the premature sociologies of the past, from Mably to Le Play, and present a body of corrective fact which the system-makers had need reckon with. The Sphinx of history has elaborated her riddle; and he must be a wary Œdipus who shall now read it aright.

The same praise for orderly and unified presentment of fact is due in a less degree to the *Histoire Sommaire de la Civilisation* of M. Ducoudray, one of the remarkable series of historical manuals supplied during the past twenty-five years to the French higher schools. The editor of the English adaptation of M. Ducoudray's book,<sup>1</sup> the Rev.

<sup>1</sup> Chapman & Hall, 2 vols.

John Verschoyle, claims, and with justice, to have corrected a good many errors and added a good deal of new matter to the original ; but the original appears to have the advantage in respect of being really used in the French schools, whereas I cannot discover that Mr Verschoyle's edition has affected education in this country. It could be wished that it had a wide circulation, because, though it is a narrative presentment rather than an interpretation of progress in civilisation, it supplies the kind of stimulus on which sociological thought proceeds.

§ 10. *Present Day Continental Sociology.*

It is when we turn to the writings of a number of younger Continental thinkers, not yet widely famous, that we find at once the strongest grounds for deciding that Buckle's was the right path in sociology, and the most hopeful signs of scientific progress on the same line. There is now rising in Europe a truly cosmopolitan school of sociology, the witness for whose activity is the first volume, just published, of the *Annales de l'Institut International de Sociologie*.<sup>1</sup> The first Congress of that Institute has done full honour to the living English names connected with its specialty ; Sir John Lubbock was chosen President for the year, and the names of Spencer and Tylor, Maine and Bagehot, are often mentioned with respect in its proceedings ; but the members who are doing constructive sociological work bear Continental names.

I. Among these I would first cite Professor Louis Gumplowicz, of the University of Gratz, author of a *Grundriss der Sociologie* (1885), and of a treatise on Sociology and Politics, *Die Sociologische Staatsidee* (1892), about to be translated into French as a volume of the *Bibliothèque Sociologique Internationale* to be published by the Institute. I cite Professor Gumplowicz first because

<sup>1</sup> Published under the supervision of René Worms, Secrétaire-Général. Tome I. Travaux du Premier Congrès, tenu à Paris, en Octobre 1894. Paris : V. Giard et E. Brière ; 7 francs.

his "Program of Sociology"<sup>1</sup> contains a clear and striking exposition and expansion of that view of the task and method of sociology which I have maintained in the foregoing pages and elsewhere.<sup>2</sup> Sociology, he argues, is properly neither a cyclopædia of all the social sciences nor a philosophy of these sciences. The science, properly speaking, has for its object some natural *processus*; "for where there is no such *processus* there is no science: each science being only the observation of a natural *processus* with the aim of seizing its dominant laws."<sup>3</sup> And it is "the movements of human groups and the influences reciprocally exercised by them which constitute the natural *processus* that forms the object of sociology." This movement is to be conceived, not in the old fashion of the historians as a genealogical tree springing from one root and spreading abroad, but as an "ever-widening agglomeration of groups and races of a character formerly simple, in amalgams of a character ever more mixed, which the anthropologists (Kollmann) call 'penetration.'"<sup>4</sup> This process, too, is to be conceived as continuous: "the essence which it manifests in historic times, it must necessarily have possessed in all prehistoric times."<sup>5</sup> And M. Gumplowicz insists that the general conception is necessary to a successful application of sociology to current social problems:—

"As long as we are not in accord on the principal and preliminary question of the first commencement of social life on the earth, we must lack the true view, the perspective on the *direction* in which all the development of mankind moves: if we do not clear up this preliminary question we can never know in what direction we march, what cosmic current bears us along."<sup>6</sup>

And he proceeds to bracket the "tree" conception, or doctrine of "monogenism," with the old geocentric theory of astronomy;<sup>7</sup> going on further to make short work of the

<sup>1</sup> *Annales* cited, p. 75.

<sup>2</sup> *Introduction to Modern English Politics*, in *Free Review*, Dec. 1894—Feb. 1895.

<sup>3</sup> As cited, p. 76.

<sup>4</sup> Pp. 78-79.

<sup>5</sup> P. 79.

<sup>6</sup> P. 81.

<sup>7</sup> P. 82.

verbalistic German method of dealing with the State as a "moral domain,"<sup>1</sup> or "the organised personality of the people,"<sup>2</sup> or "the organism of liberty."<sup>3</sup> "Each government represents the dominant group."<sup>4</sup> "A social struggle is the normal life of the State, each group tending to exploit the others as much as possible."<sup>5</sup> "Law is not, as so many jurisconsults pretend, the expression of the common volition of an entire people; it is rather the result of a social struggle, of a combat or at least of a competition of the groups forming the State."<sup>6</sup>

It is because I endorse, and feel the importance of, these propositions, that I am concerned to add that Professor Gumplowicz in my opinion couples them with others which do not derive from the same principles, and which do not rest on evidence. For instance (1) he commits himself to the doctrine that "every religion develops itself from monotheism to polytheism," an assertion contradicted by all scientific hierology, from Hume to Tylor, and recognisable as an *a priori* fallacy on the part of M. Gumplowicz. From his generalisation that societies are complexes of simples, he deduces that religions must start from monotheism and combine into polytheism. But while it is quite true that religions combine, and that polytheistic hierarchies have been constructed by the grouping of tribal or regional deities, it does not at all follow that the primeval man or tribe has only one deity. It is well made out on the lines of Hume, Comte, Spencer, Tylor, and Vignoli, that the primitive intelligence personalises all natural forces, and is thus inevitably polytheistic. Indeed a collectivist polytheism could not conceivably arise save on the basis of a spontaneous individual polytheism. Monotheism is historically seen arising as a philosophic or syncretic generalisation, which, when borrowed by a freshly constructed and tribal priestly corporation, such as that of the post-Exilic Jews, may be made the basis of a virulent attack on polytheism. The position of M. Gumplowicz on this point, I see, was promptly challenged in discussion by M. Maxime

<sup>1</sup> Stahl.    <sup>2</sup> Bluntschli.    <sup>3</sup> Ihering.    <sup>4</sup> P. 83.    <sup>5</sup> P. 84.    <sup>6</sup> P. 85.

Kovalewsky, one of the rising group of sociologists in Russia ; and it is to be hoped he will reconsider it.

Again, to say nothing of some incidental inconsistencies (one of which was promptly pointed out by M. Ferdinand Tönnies),<sup>1</sup> M. Gumplowicz seems to me to fall into complete inconsequence when he speaks (2) of the law of the strife of social forces as representing a "superior reason," and (3) of socialism as a vain dream of "changing the laws of nature."<sup>2</sup> The State, he declares, is the natural reality: Socialism is the eternal Fata Morgana which haunts the human spirit. "The State, with its domination of some over others, is a piece of Nature. . . . Can man change this natural *processus*?" The answer here is twofold, and so doubly destructive. On the one hand, in so far as the more capable will always, to some extent, think for and guide the less capable, Socialism may be said to involve a domination of some over others: on the other hand, Socialism realised would only be a continuance of the alleged process, in respect that the socialising group would be dominating the individualistic group,—to use one of the Professor's own formulas. Looking at the matter in the light of evolution, we see that many of the cruder forms of strife have been successively subordinated to social polity. The early forms of strife were physical, becoming gradually more psychic or intellectual in motive. The order has been, roughly speaking: strifes between individuals for food, for lairs, for females; between clans and tribes for possession of districts; between States and rulers for booty, for glory, for empire, for creeds, for commercial monopoly, for political ideas; till at last there is a growing intellectual aversion to all forms alike. There remains, as among individuals, the quasi-intellectual struggle for wealth, and thus far the commercial or property-seeking form of strife subsists. But that form of strife in turn may just as well be subordinated to social polity, leaving the force of strife to take the non-destructive and purely intellectual shape of clashing ideals of art, of philosophy,

<sup>1</sup> P. 107.

<sup>2</sup> P. 100.



of political adaptation, and of private conduct, all of which forms of strife are already in evidence. Things may or may not move in this way; but in any case the thesis of M. Gumplowicz is quite arbitrary. He seems partly to realise this when he hastens to avow<sup>1</sup> that Socialist theories "have their foundations in the nature of human societies, and bring their part to the social evolution." In this admission is contained the solvent of the previous dogma about the unchangeable laws of Nature.

It is very instructive to note how M. Gumplowicz, like so many of his predecessors, does in the end but express his personal political bias and seek for it the sanction of an *a priori* sociological law. While rightly conceiving social life as a *processus*, where Mr Spencer practically sees it as a case in statics, he yet comes to Mr Spencer's foregone attitude on political principle, which again was the attitude of Buckle, who treated social movement up to that point dynamically. Evidently the strictly scientific sociology—the sociology which eliminates the personal equation—is still to seek. It may be that it belongs to the nature of the problem that the contact of the science with practice shall always be in terms of genetic bias. But in any case it is for us to note here that M. Gumplowicz at least, though he does not in the essay before us mention Buckle, is in substantial accord with Buckle's method, which is endorsed by his sound formulas, and is only too fully in accord with Buckle's final political prescription.

II. Another German Professor who figures in the first transactions of the Sociological Institute is Paul von Lilienfeld, author of five volumes of *Gedanken über die Socialwissenschaft der Zukunft*, whom we have seen approvingly mentioned by Schäffle for his application of the biological analogy to the science of society. This writer's "Thoughts on the Sociology of the Future," it will readily be inferred from the foregoing discussions, seem to me of much less sociological value than the outlines of Professor Gumplowicz. In his paper on "The Organic Method in

<sup>1</sup> P. 103.

Sociology" he presses the semi-mystical method of analogy to all lengths:—

"The difference of psychological action in the breast of the individual organism from that which manifests itself in society is only exterior and relative. The nervous cells of the individual organism are mechanically united at certain parts of the body by means of nerve threads; they consequently communicate with each other, by means of these threads, directly. In human society, individuals are not irrevocably united by a mechanical bond among themselves and with the whole; action consequently is produced among them by the intermediary of the environment, and the reflexes are changed from direct to indirect."<sup>1</sup>

While sympathising in the main with the practical ideas of Professor von Lilienfeld, I cannot see that this process of analogy-framing amounts to anything like sociological demonstration. There is indeed a sociological as well as a physiological truth involved in the proposition that "Every individual from infancy to ripe age really experiences in brief the history of humanity from primitive times to our own;"<sup>2</sup> but even here there is opened an entrance for the old fallacy of the inevitable decay and death of States. To say, again, that in respect of the nervous elements "the infant really represents the primitive man,"<sup>3</sup> is but to float a fantasy which provokes the question—What was represented by the primitive infant? And it is difficult to see any useful truth whatever in the following:—

"Every community of men presents . . . three spheres, the economic, juridical, and political, which correspond with the physiological, morphological, and unitary spheres of the organisms of Nature. We have proved in our 'Thoughts on the Social Science of the Future' that this analogy ought to be conceived not in a figurative but in a perfectly real sense."<sup>4</sup>

Professor von Lilienfeld is, to my thinking, right in his view that the developed sense or instinct of social interest may and should override the intermediate factor of personal interest as a basis of polity; but I cannot see that he

<sup>1</sup> *Annales*, p. 49, citing the author's *Gedanken*, Bd. i., Kap. 20.

<sup>2</sup> *Annales*, p. 51, citing the *Gedanken*, Bd. i., Kap. 12.

<sup>3</sup> *Annales*, p. 52.

<sup>4</sup> *Ib.*, p. 54, citing the *Gedanken*, Bd. i., Kap. 9.

makes this view axiomatic by way of speaking of society as a "real living organism." Crediting Smith, Malthus, and Ricardo respectively with "discovering" the laws of division of labour, population, and rent, he complains<sup>1</sup> that these economists have not conceived human society as such an organism. It might have struck him, one would think, that if they did not so see matters the actuality of the "organism" must be somewhat transcendental, to say the least. The individual organism knows itself as such easily enough! It is perhaps significant of the practical and historic weakness of Professor von Lilienfeld's lore that he gives credit for "discoveries" in cases where, as all specialists in economics know, there was no "discovery." The effect of the division of labour was noted before Smith, the law of population before Malthus, the law of rent before Ricardo. A clearer hold on historic movement would perhaps bring it home to Professor von Lilienfeld that men are to be persuaded to a given course by a concrete and not by an abstract demonstration that it is expedient to take it.

In the discussion which followed his paper, its weak points came out dramatically enough. M. Novicow<sup>2</sup> pointed out that it would not do to regard the brain, with von Lilienfeld, as typifying all government; because men in power are often not the most enlightened of a nation! Yet M. Novicow was willing to pass the analogy if only it made the brain the analogue of the *élite* of the nation—as if the *élite*, or the best brains, were always in the habit of controlling the whole! The "right word" surely, was that of M. René Worms, who, approving of the organic comparison in general, remarked how contradictorily it is worked out in particular, and argued that the theory is to be taken merely as a "notion of scientific order, not as a dogma of applied politics." The real truth involved, he pointed out, is that the method of observation of natural science is properly that of sociology. That method is: "observe and experiment, then class the facts, to induce

<sup>1</sup> *Annales*, p. 57.

<sup>2</sup> P. 60.

the laws, then deduce from these the applications." But this method applies equally to the study of stars and minerals, which are not organisms. "Then the method of observation of sociology in general is independent of the theory of the society-organism."<sup>1</sup> M. Worms has here vindicated for France her old claim to lucidity and sanity. And here once more the method of Buckle stands justified.

III. Among the younger sociologists of France, as represented in the first Annals of the new Institute, a noticeable figure is that of M. G. Tarde, who in a paper on "La Sociologie Élémentaire," set forth his doctrine that the great fact in social evolution is "imitation." This doctrine at once reveals itself as an attempt to state in terms of one socio-psychological fact the whole socio-historical *processus*; and it consists with his devotion to that specialty of interpretation that he is at pains to criticise narrowly the doctrine of M. Durkheim, who to a cursory reader seems, where he is precise, to say much the same thing as M. Tarde, only more concretely, but whom M. Tarde charges with substituting for psychology a "veritable scholastic ontology."<sup>2</sup> It may suffice here to indicate the discussion as one of the more sophisticated of the issues raised in the new ferment of sociological thought; and to say that M. Tarde's theorem of "imitation," the germ of which will be found in Mr Bagehot's "Physics and Politics"<sup>3</sup> (though M. Tarde worked out his theory independently), has been capably criticised by Professor Enrico Ferri, of the University of Rome.<sup>4</sup>

IV. Professor Ferri, who is the author of an important work on Criminal Sociology, and of one on "Socialism and Positive Science," stands out in turn as one of the new sociologists who declare for Socialism, but do so in terms of economic and not of quasi-biological demonstration. Here he has, in my opinion, a decided advantage over Professor von Lilienfeld, if not over Schäffle, who won his status first as an economist; and if only he were a little

<sup>1</sup> P. 61.

<sup>2</sup> *Annales*, p. 214.

<sup>3</sup> Pp. 88-111.

<sup>4</sup> In a paper in the French review, *Le Devenir Social*, Juin, 1895.

less of a Marxist partisan, he would be quite the most persuasive of the younger sociologists of the day. As it is, he has clearly grasped a strong sociological weapon, and, allowance being made for his somewhat high-pitched eulogy of Marx, he is seen to have elevated that strident propagandist's main thesis to an assured position in general sociology. Unfortunately Professor Ferri, in his only allusion to Buckle, shows that he knows that author only by misleading hearsay. He writes:—<sup>1</sup>

"For the scientific explanation of social evolution we have the two contrary and one-sided theories of *telluric determinism* (from Montesquieu to Buckle and Metschnikoff) and of *anthropological determinism*, as in nearly all the ethnologists." Whereas the truth lies in the "genial and fecund theory of Karl Marx, that social evolution is the resultant alike of telluric, anthropologic, and *economic* determinism."

As to Metschnikoff I will not speak; but if Signor Ferri will but refresh his knowledge of Montesquieu he will find that even that writer had gone far beyond mere "telluric" determinism; and if he will but read through Buckle, he will find that only a small part of Buckle's sociological interpretation is in terms of mere telluric determinism; the fact being, as we have abundantly seen, that Buckle was one of the very first (Charles Comte being one of his predecessors) to apply the principle of economic determinism to the sociological problem; and that he even went further, and dealt with the forces of intellectual determinism, including in them that factor of "imitation" in which M. Tarde sees all the other forces implied. Learning this, Signor Ferri will perhaps be less dithyrambic over the service done to sociology by Marx; though he will of course say, as I have done, that Buckle's endorsement of *laissez-faire* is a clear failure to apply the principle of economic determinism scientifically to the society of to-day. On the other hand, he in turn will have to recognise that there are other forms of determinism than the economic, though the economic may be classed as one of the most fundamental.

<sup>1</sup> *Annales* cited, p. 164.

As to the truly sociological principle which he affirms, most of those who have learned from Buckle will probably endorse Signor Ferri's declaration that "that living reality of men and things which inspires the positive theory of 'economic determinism'" is "the only one which can save sociology from endless vagabondage, comparable to that of a botanist who should study in the air the flowers of a tree without at the same time studying the branches, the trunk, and the roots sunk in the earth."<sup>1</sup> But the sociological principle of economic determinism is one thing, and the application of it to politics is another. And when Signor Ferri concludes that "Sociology will be Socialist or cease,"<sup>2</sup> he of course overstates his case. Naturally his conclusion elicited demur at the Congress, Mm. Worms, Kovalewsky, and Tönnies all deprecating the decision that all Sociology involves or demonstrates Socialism. M. Worms pointed to the Individualism of Spencer, and M. Tönnies to the Radical Individualism of Thorold Rogers.

V. M. Worms, in turn, lays down a sound canon, corrective alike of the *laissez-faire* prescriptions of Buckle and Spencer, and of the Marx-or-nothing prescription of Signor Ferri. In a paper on "La Science et l'Art en Matière Social" he points out that there is an economic science and an economic art.

"Science does not seek to discover how things ought to be : it seeks to discover how they are. . . . To practise science is to seek to know ; and one cannot, properly speaking, 'know' what ought to be : one can but imagine, desire, will. On the contrary, one may (with much effort) 'know' what has been or is. The domain of science in a word, then, is the real, in its triviality if you will, but also in its immovable solidity. The ideal is a stranger to this domain."<sup>3</sup>

Analogically, botany is a science, agriculture and gardening are arts : and so with zoology and breeding, psychology and pedagogy, pathology and medicine.<sup>4</sup> But even as in

<sup>1</sup> Article on *La Théorie Sociologique de M. Tarde*, in *Le Devenir Social*, Juin, 1895, p. 262.

<sup>2</sup> *Annales*, p. 167.

<sup>3</sup> *Annales*, p. 170.

<sup>4</sup> P. 174.

these cases the science tends to determine the methods of the art, so will Sociology tend to determine the method of the political art. "The ideal of each man is rightly distinct from the reality which his experience embraces: it springs from it nevertheless."<sup>1</sup>

Perhaps, to be quite just, the conclusion of M. Worms should be somewhat modified. We so often see different ideals resting on a similar objective experience that we are driven to admitting that a man sees in life what he has a faculty and bias for seeing; and that his ideal is a joint function of his special personality and his knowledge, the personality as often colouring the knowledge as the knowledge the personality. It is only the continuous accumulation and transmission of knowledge that in the long run can modify the personalities in a given direction. Here again we come back to the ground plan of Buckle, recognising once more that where he fell short sociologically he had really failed to develop that plan aright. But as we had realised this before, we do not find that a comparison of his performance with the most alert and expert sociological thought of the day leaves him discredited in his province. On the contrary, it reveals him as anticipating by a generation the scientific method of sociology, and justifies us afresh in quashing the incompetent verdicts passed upon him by unqualified critics.

VI. A paragraph of special notice is due, finally, to the work of Professor Pulszky of Budapest, "The Theory of Law and Civil Society," published by himself in English<sup>2</sup> as well as in German. That too is a work in large part on the lines of the dynamic conception of sociology which we have just seen making its way among the rising Continental sociologists; and its dryness of style must not be allowed to let it miss its due recognition as a thoughtful and suggestive treatise. I take leave to pronounce it of the interpretative school of Buckle, in a measure, though I have not observed that it ever mentions Buckle or any of his doctrines; and though it is dedicated to Maine, whom

<sup>1</sup> P. 177.

<sup>2</sup> T. Fisher Unwin, 1888.

the author credits with having revolutionised the study of law,<sup>1</sup> there is really a deeper congruity with the teaching of Buckle than with that of Maine in Professor Pulszky's statement of his method :—

"The memories of past events place before us in abundant variety the coöperation of the most different agencies and the concurrence of the most diverging phenomena, thus supplementing our rarer opportunities for individual observation with the added experience hoarded up through ages of generations and through cycles of periods. This enables us to make our point of departure in scientific inquiries not only the abstract, *i.e.*, in pursuit of the rational order, but also the concrete, in pursuit of the historical order. If we besides reflect that the law of necessary causality is always pervading history as well, and that, by retracing events, we can discern their causes behind them, it will be found that history not only furnishes facts, proper matter for investigation, but that by means of it we can discover in the things of the past the explanation of the present, and of every circumstance lying behind it, and are able to fructify historical research by genetic<sup>2</sup> or derivative and causal reasoning. The genetic method thus appears to be in reality the full application of the inductive way of proceeding to the facts furnished by history."<sup>3</sup>

This general conception is further developed by way of insisting on the twofold value of sociological study, in that, in learning "the causes of the errors occurring in theories" we are also taught "to avoid the faults incident to subjective reasoning."<sup>4</sup> And these ideals Professor Pulszky reduces to practice with much ability in that portion of his book for which alone he claims any originality, the chapters dealing with "Society and its Organisation," "The Mutual Relations of the Societies," and "The Societies in History." It is, however, rather in the third of these chapters than in the first and second that valuable results are arrived at. The first and second, indeed, exemplify rather the dangers of the genetic method and its past miscarriages than its scientific purification. Dealing with

<sup>1</sup> Preface. Compare the admission, p. 146, as to the error in Maine's sociological foundation.

<sup>2</sup> This use of the word "genetic," as applied to reasoning, must not be confused with Mr Lester Ward's use of it (below, § 11) in reference to the "processes of Nature."

<sup>3</sup> Work cited, p. 49. Cf. p. 52.

<sup>4</sup> P. 52.



the application of the notion of organism to a society, Dr Pulszky observes that it has frequently given rise to misunderstandings and mistakes, and urges that it should only be attempted in so far "as may be justified by actual traceable phenomena."<sup>1</sup> But he seems to me to trespass beyond these limits, and in consequence to repeat some of the most serious errors of the older sociology. Thus he arrives at the old assumptions (1) that every society "passes through several phases in its separate course of life, and successively presents the spectacle of growth, of stagnation, and finally of dissolution," and (2) that "every society can in truth only start from the initiative of single individuals," the individual being always "some transcendent genius."<sup>2</sup> Dr Pulszky apparently does not apply the doctrine of growth and dissolution in the old fashion to *States*, but rather conceives of the successive stages of a society, or of groups within it, as so many successive societies. Even in this form, however, the doctrine is neither valid historically nor justifiable as a biological analogy; while the doctrine of individual initiatives is in the same case. It is indeed contradictory of Dr Pulszky's own admission that human society is a process of development from animal life; since he admits that there are animal societies, to which he does not venture to apply the hero-theory, and since even in the act of positing that he speaks<sup>3</sup> of the process of society-making as occurring "within the sphere of primitive undefined society, or of a society already established"<sup>4</sup>—a sufficiently confusing statement. It is indeed of great importance to note, as we have seen Professor Gumplowicz doing, that all progress is by strifes of groups and interests, or, as I have elsewhere put it, that men unite in order to conflict. But in the mere interest of consistent terminology, it is undesirable that the ever-varying inner groups and the slowly evolving totality

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 108-109.

<sup>2</sup> Pp. 115-118.

<sup>3</sup> P. 115.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. p. 105 :—"Society in general forms in a manner the original matter from which definite societies develop, but which no social formations can ever exhaust."

should be indifferently labelled "societies," or that the dominant order or interest in a state should be called the dominant society. In Dr Pulszky's pages on these matters we are never sure what proposition we are dealing with; but whether it concerns the State or the class or interest, it is equally impossible to accept the view that the genetic principle took rise in an individual's initiative. The principle of aggregation is different in the two cases; but in neither can we regard eminent individuals as the originators of the grouping process. It consists with Dr Pulszky's view that he should further hold that "the government of every society is, in its course of transitions, at first of a monarchical character; it is aristocratic during the periods of the struggles of development."<sup>1</sup> This proposition appears to be framed partly with an eye to the case of Rome; and the case of modern France seems to have suggested the further formulas that a "society which has been dominant for a long time tends to become in peace democratic," and that "when attacked by a new society it invariably becomes despotic"<sup>2</sup>—that is, if Dr Pulszky is thinking of States and not of classes or corporations. In that case, the generalisations will not square with the cases of Switzerland, Scotland, China, and Greece, to mention no others. Again, there is no generality of bearing in the formula that "where the vital interests of neighbouring societies are not of a kindred nature, their opposition must grow irreconcilable and absolute, and the struggle can only terminate with the subjection of one of the contending societies"<sup>3</sup>—if "societies" here means "States." The formula applies to Rome and Carthage; but the second clause is equally true of the case of Rome and the other Italic States, where the interests *were* "of a kindred character"; and we have further the cases of long and bitter but not fatal strife between States with kindred interests, as England and Holland, because of the very fact of similarity of interest. If the formula is meant on the other hand to apply to classes or castes or interests, it is

<sup>1</sup> P. 130.<sup>2</sup> P. 131.<sup>3</sup> P. 133.

still further wide of the mark. In short, where Dr Pulszky writes abstractly, he is much open to criticism.

It is in his ninth chapter, dealing with specific historical cases, that he seems to me to do his best sociological work. Not that that is not open to criticism in parts also ; but the propositions, being mostly made as to particular societies, are more often sound and verifiable, while the general views thrown out are often acute and suggestive. There, too, the conception of a general sociology best justifies itself. Dr Pulszky sees, with Heeren and Comte and Buckle, the special complexity of European culture, and notes, on Buckle's method, how "it represents the influence of all those agencies, without any exception, which either singly or in some variety of combination explain the systems of other civilisations, and besides includes factors peculiar to itself."<sup>1</sup> I will not attempt to reproduce Dr Pulszky's explanations, which one and all imply general sociological laws, and do not at all visibly consist with his theory of individual initiative, since he decides that the whole evolution of Asiatic societies "arises from human wants and circumstances of a general nature, and not merely from the peculiarities of any particular race or people."<sup>2</sup> Suffice it to say that his study of movement in early societies is constantly suggestive and helpful ; and that his general view of the nature of the forces of progress is, from the point of view of the present investigation, a sound one. The remark that Europe "owes its escape from a fate similar to that of the Byzantine Empire, to the dispelling of the dreams of the Hispano-Germanic world-empire"<sup>3</sup> is in full harmony with the view that cross-fertilisations of culture are the causes of progress ; and the Professor's view of the spread of Islam as fundamentally an economic or wealth-seeking migration rather than a religious movement<sup>4</sup> is well worth consideration. Again, the view that "Theocracy in itself being the hierarchical rule of a priestly class, is but a species of

<sup>1</sup> P. 198.

<sup>2</sup> P. 199.

<sup>3</sup> P. 204.

<sup>4</sup> P. 207.

aristocracy" <sup>1</sup> is one of a series of just sociological suggestions as to the evolution of Judaism and Christianity. It is only to be regretted that Dr Pulszky does not consistently hold and apply the principle that all progress is in terms of culture-contacts, but falls into the conventional European view of Islam as peculiarly and innately anti-progressive. "Its part in the history of the world," he writes, "is not that of an agency of progress, but that of a factor of stagnation, and thus of dissolution and degradation." <sup>2</sup> Now, Dr Pulszky's own surveys go to bear out the general truth that every religion, but especially every religion with a sacred book, is a "factor of stagnation," and he implies that Byzantium went the way of Islam. The scientific summary then would be, not that Islam is especially such a factor, but that by reason of cessation of culture-contacts at a certain stage, Mohammedan civilisation ceased to progress. As a matter of fact, it had been a great help, by its contact, to the European renaissance; and it was the fanatical and barbarous spirit of ecclesiastically organised Christendom that, returning evil for good, isolated the Western Mohammedan world and so arrested the progress of that in retarding its own. Dr Pulszky seems to hold it a demerit in Saracen civilisation that "all its splendour was derived immediately through the channels of the Persian, the Greek, and, to some smaller extent, of the neighbouring Indian civilisations." <sup>3</sup> If that be a just censure, every secondary civilisation in history is equally open to disparagement; and no nation in Europe can escape a double degree of it. A less serious error in the application of the principle of culture-contact is the description of China as "debarred by external pressure from independently and progressively developing." <sup>4</sup> The true statement would be that lack of external stimulus has permitted China to stagnate; and

<sup>1</sup> P. 206. It should be noted that Guizot had previously described the mediæval Church organisation as "a Government essentially aristocratic" (*Civ. en Europe*, 12ième Leçon, *end.*).

<sup>2</sup> P. 208.

<sup>3</sup> P. 208.

<sup>4</sup> P. 212.

Dr Pulszky's handling of the case of Japan immediately afterwards bears this out.

Here, then, we have one more interpretative sociologist figuring as a "follower" of Maine, yet doing his best work in so far as he applies the methods of Buckle, and falling short in so far as he fails to apply them. His conclusions as to the possible future realisation of "ideals of progress hitherto not realised, at first always by means of social coöperation, but later by the aid of institutions of the State, which are invariably the most perfect and effective organs of the consciousness of society, and of the will of the community,"<sup>1</sup> is a fitting improvement of Buckle where Buckle fell short, and is not at all an expression of any of the principles of Maine.

#### § 11. MR LESTER WARD.

It is fitting that a separate and concluding section in this survey should be given to the remarkable work of Mr Lester F. Ward, entitled "Dynamic Sociology."<sup>2</sup> This is a performance of "long breath," rather standing out as a competitor with the *magna opera* of Comte and Spencer and Schäffle than counting as one among a group of transitory and equipollent essays; and it is conceivable that a greater terseness and massiveness and finish of composition would have given it at once a classic status. As it is, Mr Ward's book is one of the most considerable products of American scientific thought, comparing in its kind with the scholarly labours of Mr Lea. As its title implies, it is a deliberate declaration for a constructive or prescriptive sociology, as additional to the ledgering method of Mr Spencer, whom Mr Ward ably criticises, and of M. Letourneau's first volume, which, however, he does not seem to have seen. "A growing sense of the essential sterility of all that has thus far been done in the domain of social science," he tells in his preface, "has furnished the chief incentive to the preparation of this work;" and he

<sup>1</sup> P. 215.

<sup>2</sup> New York: Appleton & Co. (1883), 2 vols.

posits at once his charge that the school of Spencer has only advanced from the purely statical stage of Hobbes, Locke, and Voltaire, "to the passively dynamic stage, which recognises only the changes wrought by Nature, unaided by Art."

"Before the science of society can be truly founded," he claims, "another advance must be made, and the actively dynamic stage reached, in which social phenomena shall be contemplated as capable of intelligent control by society itself in its own interest. . . . Sociology is reproached even by those who admit its legitimacy, with being impracticable and fruitless. The prevailing methods of treating it, including those employed by its highest living advocates, to a great extent justify this charge. There are dead sciences as well as dead languages. The real object of science is to benefit man. A science which fails to do this, however agreeable its study, is lifeless. Sociology, which of all sciences should benefit man most, is in danger of falling into the class of polite amusements, or dead sciences. It is the object of this work to point out a method by which the breath of life may be breathed into its nostrils."

Broadly speaking, Mr Ward's effort to this end may be described as the effort of a powerful naturalist with an ideal of social education; and it may perhaps not be altogether idle to try to bring out its relation to the other leading sociologies we have glanced at by labelling Mr Spencer's in comparison, as the effort of a powerful and self-willed analyst with an ideal of merely contemplative synthesis; Comte's as the effort of a powerful and philosophic pedagogue, with an ideal of systematic mastership and regulation; Schäffle's as the effort of a powerful *a priori* methodist; Letourneau's that of a lucid cyclopedist with a gift not always exercised for generalisation; and Le Play's that of a powerful patriarchal pietist. The labelling is very rough-and-ready, but it may help to a better. Not one of all these writers, be it observed, is to be described as a sociologising or economic historian: Buckle alone, and emphatically, earns that distinction. And if we are right in the conclusion at which we have arrived on so many different lines of comparison, that the decisive preparation for the sociologist is comprehensive historical and economic

study *plus* scientific light and method, it will follow that Mr Ward, however masterly his fulfilment of his own plan, has not any more than the others superseded the performance of Buckle—whom, by the way, he does not once mention. None the less, his is an important and durable contribution to social science.

Like Comte and Spencer, Mr Ward grounds his sociology on the prior sciences; and he is entitled to claim, as he unobtrusively does, that his procedure is original in respect of his connectedly formulating

“1. The law of Aggregation, as distinguished from that of Evolution proper.

“2. The theory of the Social Forces, and the fundamental antithesis which they imply between Feeling and Function.

“3. The contrast between these true Social Forces and the guiding influence of the Intellect, embodying the application of the Indirect Method of Conation and the essential nature of Invention, of Art, and of Dynamic Action.

“4. The superiority of Artificial or Teleological Processes over Natural or Genetic Processes; and finally,

“5. The recognition and demonstration of the paramount necessity for the equal and universal Distribution of the extant Knowledge of the world, which last is the crown of the system itself.”

The fulfilment of this plan is methodical in a high degree. The law of Aggregation is expressed by the steps of

*a. Primary Aggregation.* Cosmogeny, or Genesis of Matter and of Celestial Bodies: Chemical Relations.

*b. Secondary Aggregation.*

1. Biogeny, or Genesis of Life and of Organic Forms: Vital Relations.

2. Psychogeny, or Genesis of Mind—Psychic Relations.

3. Anthropogeny, or Genesis of Man.

*c. Tertiary Aggregation.* Sociogeny, or Genesis of Society: Social Relations: Statical and Passively Dynamic Sociology.

These studies fill one of Mr Ward's two volumes; and the second is the exposition of “Actively Dynamic Sociology: Artificial Control of Social Forces.” Here the line of demonstration is ethico-sociological, as is shown in this

*"Hierarchy of Means to Ends.*

- "1. Ultimate End of Conation—Utility as measured by Happiness.
2. First Proximate End of Conation—Progress.
3. Second Proximate End of Conation—Action.
4. Third Proximate End of Conation—Opinion.
5. Fourth Proximate End of Conation—Knowledge.
6. Fifth and last Proximate, and Initial Means to the Ultimate, End of Conation—Education."

It can hardly be said that this schema is as symmetrically satisfying, as just in its analysis, as the former; but no candid student will dispute that Mr Ward has wrought it out with a care and competence, and what is more, a courage, not easily to be matched in the literature of moral science. Quite as distinctly as Mr Spencer, Mr Ward recognises the manifold forces which thwart social progress at every step; even more explicitly than Mr Spencer, he declares the utter invalidity of all religious theories of past and rules of present action; more penetratingly than Mr Spencer, he exposes the crudity and inadequacy of current ethics; and with a sanity which Comte lacked he seeks to apply to action Comte's excellent generalisation: "Science, whence foresight; foresight, whence action: such is the very simple formula which exactly expresses the general relation of *science* and of *art*, taking these expressions in their total scope."<sup>1</sup>

No one, indeed, has put the demand for social science more impressively and persistently than Mr Ward. His pervading doctrine is that social progress as a whole must be made by social art, and that if it is ever to realise the hopes of any school, static or dynamic, genetic or teleological,<sup>2</sup> socialistic or individualistic, the development of social art

<sup>1</sup> *Philosophie Positive*, édit. 1869, i. 51.

<sup>2</sup> Mr Ward rightly argues that the term and idea of "teleology," being disallowed by science in the field of pre-human nature, ought not to be dropped but rather applied where it is valid and useful, in the field of human action (*Dynamic Sociology*, i. 29, 65). "Genetic" he uses, in the sense of non-purposive, to describe the processes of unconscious Nature, and the relatively less conscious progress of Man (i. 65). Here, however, there arises a psychological problem which, as is argued below, Mr Ward has not solved.



must be greatly quickened. Yet his conception of social art is eminently sane, his constant doctrine being that while legislation is to social life what invention is to material life, and is equally to be promoted, happiness cannot be attained by direct, but only by indirect or what he calls "attractive" legislation;<sup>1</sup> a doctrine which might be set in still more effective contrast to the *laissez-faire* of Buckle and Mr Spencer by putting it in the formula that the aim of social art is to create and maintain the best *conditions* for the development of the powers of the greatest number of individuals. The need for the resort to art Mr Ward specially grounds on the obvious possibilities of relapse in modern civilisation, in terms especially of the increased facilities for increase of population;<sup>2</sup> in which regard he is entitled to special praise for an outspokenness that is depressingly scarce. No less explicit and straightforward is his treatment of the question of materialism, on which he attempts none of the prudential glossings so common in the writings of modern English men of science. In short, like nearly all the systematic sociologists of the century, Mr Ward stands for rationalism and repudiates theology.

The comparative purpose of this chapter, however, compels me to give less space to the praise of Mr Ward's line of reasoning—with which I gladly avow my hearty general sympathy—than to the criticism of its flaws. These, indeed, are neither many nor vital, to my thinking, being rather imperfections or shortcomings than positive errors of teaching; and they seem to me to arise mainly out of a failure to make an independent study of the province of psychology. They may almost be worked down to one specific defect: Inconsistent or confused treatment of the old problem as to the differentiation of "intellect" and "feeling."

The difficulty as to "intellect" and "feeling" meets us constantly in Mr Ward's chapters. In the very first he writes:—

<sup>1</sup> Work cited, i. 25, 36-45, 518, 580; ii. 153, 235, 249, 307, 467, 547, etc.

<sup>2</sup> I. 16, 704-706; ii. 15, 210, 272.

"The motive of *all* action is feeling. . . . Purely intellectual feeling is never sufficient directly to sway the multitude. . . . It is *feeling* and not intellect which is required to *influence* human action. . . . Those persons . . . who are looking forward to the time when intellect and reason shall *assume control* of society, dethroning passion and emotion, are doomed to disappointment. . . . Intellect is not an impelling but a *directing* force. . . . All the *control* that can ever be exerted over mankind must, in the future *as in the past, emanate from the side of feeling* and not of intellect, . . . at the same time . . . all the true progress which has in fact taken place in the world has come from the side of intellect and not of feeling. . . . All the real progress that has been made in the world has been the result . . . of the operation of the *uncontrolled* and unknown laws of nature. . . . Man's progress has been the progress of nature, *not* the progress of art, the result of foresight and *intelligent direction*. . . . An *entirely new* element would have to be added to the emotional force in order to ensure success (in human improvement). This element is the guidance of the intellect. Not that the intellect is at all a propelling force. It is, and can only be, a directive force. . . . The problem is to apply the vast emotional forces which are ever striving to improve society . . . to some truly progressive system of machinery. . . . *The intellect alone cannot do this*. It must be joined to facts. In short, what is really required is *knowledge*. Knowledge is simply truth apprehended by the intellect. Intelligent mind, fortified with knowledge, is the only reliable form of the directive force. . . . Although it is upon the intellect that we can alone rely to secure such a control of the social forces as shall successfully harmonise them with human advantage, it is *feeling* that must be *alone consulted* in determining what *constitutes* such advantage."<sup>1</sup>

Here we have it successively asserted that *feeling* is the *motive* to all action; that intellect only directs feeling; that there is yet "purely intellectual feeling"; that it is vain to hope intellect will ever "control" feeling or action (though it is to *direct* them); that the *control* of mankind must always "emanate from the side of feeling" as it always has done, though all progress has come from "the side of intellect"; and though all the while all progress has hitherto been the result of *uncontrolled* laws of nature, there being *no* "intelligent direction"; that a "new" element is wanted, namely the guidance of the intellect, which is the "directive force"; but that the intellect in

<sup>1</sup> I. 11, 12, 15, 19, 21, 67. Cf. p. 69.

turn is untrustworthy, and that "what is really wanted is knowledge"; while all along feeling *alone* is to be consulted as to what constitutes the advantage aimed at by feeling-guided intellect fortified by knowledge. I cannot conceive how this medley of inconsistency and contradiction can be explained away. It is of no avail to say, as Mr Ward does in one place, that there is a "paradox" in the matter. The only sense in which logic and science can tolerate "paradox" (a word of extremely various import<sup>1</sup>) is that of apparent but not real contradiction. Here there is real and reiterated contradiction. Now there must be something wrong when an able and scientific thinker thus entangles himself; and I take leave to suggest that the error begins in the acceptance of the old antithesis between intellect and feeling as a specification of two distinct and diverse elements in personality. Mr Ward indeed cannot be much blamed for an error which is constantly committed by Comte (who so scorned the process of psychological self-scrutiny), and even by Mr Spencer, albeit he has himself supplied the solution of the problem in showing that the highest processes of reasoning are only complexes of what is called intuition.<sup>2</sup> This solution Mr Ward actually notes, and apparently accepts;<sup>3</sup> and in another passage he seems to apply the principle:—

"With the lower animals, the desires are seldom more than present impulses; but with man, possessing sufficient intellect to judge somewhat of the consequences of his acts, they are controlled by reason and judgment. *There is, however, no generic distinction.*"<sup>4</sup>

Yet, as we have seen, he argues through the whole of his opening chapter on the assumption that intellect or reason is something generically distinct from instinct or intuition; and as the distinction is erroneous he naturally fails to state it consistently. He sways between the view that "feeling" is a non-rational force or motive guided by reason and the views that feeling is a criterion or an end.

<sup>1</sup> Mr Ward speaks (ii. 531) of "apparent paradoxes," a phrase to which it is hard to attach a distinct meaning.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. 131.

<sup>3</sup> II. 190-191.

<sup>4</sup> II. 133.

"All desires are *blind*. The social forces are all blind forces. They *impel* to *direct* action towards the objects of desire."<sup>1</sup> Here the confusion is in full play in one sentence. Again, we have seen him first assert that in the future as in the past all control of human action must "emanate from the side of feeling," and then decide that in the past there has really been no control of spontaneous or primary natural tendencies; that there has hitherto been no art; that all is genetic. And in a later chapter the contradiction recurs in a fiercer form. In one passage which has evidently been retouched<sup>2</sup> he first affirms that in the infancy of society "the rational faculty" [thus implied to have antecedent existence] "was completely subordinated, the passions fierce and uncurbed, and regard for others wholly absent;" and then goes on: "But government was never wanting. The most backward races usually<sup>3</sup> possess some system of authority *to prevent these fatal consequences*." Not only is there here a plain implication of rational resort to social art; but a few pages further on that is explicitly asserted: "Government must therefore be regarded as an invention of the human mind, the result of an extraordinary assertion of the rational or thinking faculty."<sup>4</sup> And yet, even after this, we have the assertion that all government is "so ill-adapted to its end that it antagonises instead of promoting [social] improvement."<sup>5</sup>

There is only one way out of this imbroglio, and that is the scientific perception that feeling and intellect, intuition and judgment, instinct and reason, are only two phases or stages or sides of an unbroken process;<sup>6</sup> and that instead of emotion being something remote from knowledge it is but one side of knowledge, there being no form of perception without its relative emotional state.<sup>7</sup> When a primary impulse is checked by reflection, the reflection is but a further or secondary play of instinct. In the words of De

<sup>1</sup> I. 487.

<sup>2</sup> II. 215.

<sup>3</sup> A footnote leaves the point of generality still more in doubt.

<sup>4</sup> II. 224.

<sup>5</sup> P. 227.

<sup>6</sup> Above, p. 131.

<sup>7</sup> This point is discussed in the author's lecture on "Emotion in History" (*Discourses on Life and Letters*: Forder).

Blainville, cited by Mr Ward<sup>1</sup> as endorsed by Comte, "instinct is fixed reason; reason is movable instinct." These epigrammatic formulas are apt to shoot a little wide, but the suggestion is in the right direction. On that view, there never was a time when human instinct or feeling was not controlled by reason or intellect,—such as it was.<sup>2</sup> It is so controlled in the lower animals. Ethically speaking, there never can have been even a herd or group, much less a society, in which "regard for others was wholly absent." There is such regard between two leopards in a cage: there had need be if they are to continue two. As regards the intellectual control of primeval societies, we have Mr Ward's own express statement that the wolf "possesses a large share of that high psychic development which is characteristic of those intelligent companions of man," dogs, and "without which it would undoubtedly be impossible for it [the wolf] to adopt gregarious habits."<sup>3</sup> This alone overthrows the generalisation which wholly excludes social art from primeval civilisation. And Mr Ward's confusion as to intellect and knowledge and feeling being each and all "the" directing force or guide of action is now seen to be soluble thus: a feeling or instinct is a primary motive to action or phase of volition: a second thought, which may or may not represent a distinct recollection of experience, may check the primary inclination, as when a fish goes to a hook and withdraws, or as when a man yearns for a crumpet and then denies himself; this checking process being unmistakably of the nature of reason; and knowledge (in the form of an instinct which may be hypothetically regarded as "unconscious memory," or as resting on simple recollection, or on complex and corrective

<sup>1</sup> I. 123.

<sup>2</sup> Mr Ward's theory is that of Gillies: "the first political societies are as independent of human intelligence . . . as the instinctive actions of plants and insects . . . are independent of any intelligence of their own" (Introd. to Aristotle's *Politics*, p. 1). Aristotle was nearer the truth when he premised that "all societies aim at some good" (*Pol.*, B. i. c. 1). Of course Aristotle was an *a priori* teleologist in all things, and only argued of man as he did of Nature (*Cf.* B. i. c. 8).

<sup>3</sup> I. 453.

recollection) *underlies all three phases*. Mr Ward's conception of intellect *without* knowledge is strictly a chimera. We may indeed plausibly speak of the psychological processes of an infant as instinct without knowledge; but in an adult any process of intellect whatever, however faulty, implies some knowledge. What generally happens is just a process of reasoning on too little knowledge; and the practical gist of all the fallacious differentiation under notice is this: that increase of knowledge means increase of the corrective power of the mind over its more spontaneous impulses. Mr Ward, in fact, has just stated independently the proposition which was made fundamental by Buckle; and it is impossible not to wish that he had studied his predecessor and used him as a starting point. He even puts forward independently Buckle's formula of the "unprogressiveness of the moral element":—

"The moral systems that have been more or less mechanically mixed with religious ones have shown themselves incapable of progressing beyond a limit reached in the time of Confucius and Hillel."<sup>1</sup>  
 "The amount of progress actually realised, including what was distinguished as latent progress, has been constantly measured by the march of material civilisation due to the arts and sciences. Moral systems have contributed nothing to this result."<sup>2</sup>

Here again, a lack of critical preparation means confusion, for in the face of these statements Mr Ward advances also this proposition :—

"All reform which it is hoped to bring about by argument, persuasion, or any of the means available to the philosopher, must hold forth moral rather than intellectual inducements. *To succeed, it must follow in the path of all previous efforts of the kind*, of the religious systems and the moral schemes of Menu, Zoroaster, Confucius, Jesus, and Mohammed."<sup>3</sup>

Once more, the contradiction is insoluble as it stands. We must abandon the crude antithesis between moral and intellectual inducements, recognising that moral like other volitions and inclinations are in terms of the more or less of knowledge, and are clearly intellectual in so far as they

<sup>1</sup> I. 10.

<sup>2</sup> II. 309.

<sup>3</sup> I. 13.

are critical. Mr Ward rightly reasons that religion and science are originally one, religion so-called being simply the early and ignorant attempt to explain phenomena, while science so-called is the later and better-informed attempt. Religion was but barbaric or primitive science. If only he had applied the same method of analysis and synthesis to the other problems of psychology, his book would have been magistral where it remains tentative. As it is, it is emphatically an intellectual product, appealing to intellectual appreciation; and yet at the same time it makes its appeal to moral feeling. There is really no antithesis in the case. Mr Ward himself again comes near seeing this in one of his manipulations of feeling and intellect:—

“There is an apparent incongruity between the doctrine, on the one hand, that progress consists essentially and solely in the elevation of the feelings, the increase of pleasure, the elimination of pain, the intensification of sentiment . . . and the general pursuit of happiness; and the doctrine, on the other hand, that progress is to be attained solely through the cultivation of the intellect, the acquisition of knowledge, . . . the elevation and systematic development of the *cold, objective faculties of the mind*. To bring these two seemingly incongruous doctrines into harmony, and to show the true mechanical *dependence of the one upon the other, as cause and effect*, is one of the primary objects of this work.”<sup>1</sup>

If the closing formula of cause and effect be adhered to, it is quite clear that the former language elevating the two phases into “essential and sole” factors is unjustifiable. The whole terminology needs reconstruction; and Mr Ward might very well have achieved this had he analysed conventional psychological doctrines instead of taking them for granted, or had he even followed out the cue of Mr Spencer.

In other respects also, a study of his predecessors in general and of Buckle in particular might have lent solidity to Mr Ward's speculations. Had he noted Buckle's theory of the rise of the great primary civilisations, he might have given a less purely *a priori* character to his own very inter-

<sup>1</sup> II. 129-130.

esting speculations on the origin of governments. It was a point well worth clearing up. Through Darwin we can form some idea of the origins of man; through the schools of Bachofen, M'Lennan, Lubbock, and Tylor we can frame some idea of the life of the primeval horde and the primeval tribe; through Buckle, we can comprehend how certain conditions determined the growths of population which yielded the great primary civilisations; but for the stage between the savage horde and the despotic government of those primary civilisations we had, when Mr Ward wrote, little save the untrustworthy guidance of Maine; the "Political Institutions" of Mr Spencer and the luminous synthetic chapter of Dr Letourneau<sup>1</sup> being as yet unwritten. Mr Ward's speculations are original and in part satisfying; but they are somewhat scantily connected with historic testimony, and, as we have seen, they are psychologically incoherent. They are thus practically superseded by the generalisations of Spencer and Letourneau.

There, as elsewhere, Mr Ward's book might further have gained, as Mr Spencer and Dr Letourneau might have gained, by resort to the method of economic determinism, which Buckle brought to bear so effectively at the outset of his schema. Mr Ward, indeed, is almost as little of an economist as Comte and Mr Spencer. But this cannot be made a reproach to him in view of his too modest protest that his "humble effort, so far from claiming to attack the problems of sociology itself, is simply an appeal to mankind to sharpen up their tools for the work, to set about the task of procuring the primary means for entering upon the campaign."<sup>2</sup> He has done more than merely appeal: he has systematically and scientifically shown grounds for the course proposed, in rebuttal of the doctrine of the leading systematic philosopher of the day; and he thus rectifies the final political prescription of the great sociologist with whom he has so much in common, but whom he so strangely ignores.

<sup>1</sup> *L'Evolution Politique*, 1890, ch. xx. § 1.

<sup>2</sup> I. 68.



I suppose it must be the common pseudo-scientific condemnation of Buckle as unscientific that has led Mr Ward to disregard him, he being himself specially a student of the physical sciences. And yet, strangely enough, he falls even more deeply than Buckle ever did into errors of expression concerning the ground principles of natural science—here again, doubtless, for lack of preparation in psychology. While expressly marking off Nature as merely genetic and non-teleological, he again and again uses language which implies teleology in nature. Thus he speaks of “the tendency in Nature to multiply individuals for the *purpose* of prematurely destroying them”;<sup>1</sup> and remarks that “the *objects* of Nature are preservation, perpetuation, and improvement,”<sup>2</sup> and that “Nature does not seem to care whether her creatures enjoy at all, so long as they persist. She is as choice of the vegetable as of the animal kingdom.” He even argues for “the completion . . . of the work of civilisation which Nature has begun but is unable to finish.”<sup>3</sup> All this, unfortunately, gives openings to the school of Mr Spencer, whom Mr Ward might so conclusively repel by noting broadly that Man, too, is just part of Nature; that his conscious social plans are just as truly natural as non-conscious processes of adaptation in lower forms of life; and that admitted miscarriages no more vitiate the principle of conscious adaptation than the destructive side of Nature cancels the phenomena of adaptation which Mr Spencer once held up as guides to conscious adaptation,<sup>4</sup> and not, as in his later teaching, as warnings to eschew conscious adaptation in matters social.<sup>5</sup>

In fine, Mr Ward, though he has thought hard and well, is seen like every other sociologist we have studied—the generalisation is chastening, if a trifle depressing—not to have thought quite enough. But this is here finally to be noted not by way of belittling his great performance, but by way of completing our cursory comparative survey

<sup>1</sup> II. 68.

<sup>2</sup> II. 130.

<sup>3</sup> II. 611.

<sup>4</sup> See his *Education*, ed. 1884, pp. 58, 70, 86, &c.

<sup>5</sup> See his *The Man versus the State*.

of modern sociological literature, to the end of judicially estimating once more the status of Buckle. And the verdict must be, I think, that Buckle holds his own with the best in point of power and range and knowledge, that nobody has superseded or overthrown him, and that his share of error is not larger than those of men with the advantage over him of a whole generation of scientific progress.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### BUCKLE'S PERSONALITY—CONCLUSION.

TO the making of a rounded estimate of any man's performance there must go, in addition to the comparative study of that, a study of the man himself, as organism, as temperament, as developing or not developing from youth onwards, as circumstanced well or ill for his undertaking. Our English criticism, which is so seldom in the hands of scientifically-minded men, has as a rule kept wide of any such twofold method, and is not slow to cast epithets at those who seek systematically to apply it. Doubtless the twofold method involves at points twofold risks of error; but on the other hand it gives in the main a help to accuracy that cannot be had without it; and even when it is ill-applied it furnishes the means of testing its errors. Thus Goethe's criticism of Newton in the *Farbenlehre*, a criticism which analyses Newton's personality as well as his work, even if it be turned to the account of a wrong scientific antagonism, is a far more instructive study than a mere polemic against Newton's theory of light could have been. And, as a rule, it will be found that a man's work can be better understood in the light of a knowledge of his temperament and character, because in that way we can best arrive at sympathy with him if for us such sympathy be possible, and best check our sympathy if it has been hastily given on the score of his work alone. I will even venture to say that in few cases where we find fault with a man's work shall we fail to see it more sympathetically, and therefore more profitably, when we learn something of his personality. Faults imply weaknesses, and when we know a man's weaknesses their intellectual outcome is less resentable. Again, there

are so many faults which arise out of a good quality carried out of balance. The late John Richard Green, for instance, falls into many an extravagance and many an inconsistency in his writing ; but when we learn something of what manner of man he was, these shortcomings lose their irksomeness ; we allow for them more easily, and we are left with a better grasp of his whole rendering of history. We know we are looking through the eyes of a certain temperament, that of a brave invalid, full of sympathetic enthusiasm, necessarily less able to brood out a durable generalisation than quick to frame one in the glow of recognition and appreciation. It is in these matters somewhat as it is with the disputes of friends or indifferent antagonists. Things said vivaciously or even hotly in direct intercourse are often more easily estimated at their proper force than they would be if put in writing. The exaggeration or the heat is at once allowed for because it is plain on the surface, and there is no time to think ourselves into a hard estimate of it at its utmost verbal significance. The written word, with its more premeditated air, and its lack of the mellowing atmosphere of talk, sets up a similar hardness of opposition if it be antagonistic. The personality of the writer, with its visible signals of temperament, is out of sight, and the letter killeth, where the living spirit might have had a saving grace. If it is easy even for friends to forget these considerations over the medium of black-on-white, it is of course much harder for readers to keep them in view in the case of a writer personally unknown to them ; and it is part of the craft of the trained writer to remember this. But when, in the end, we have an opportunity of knowing a great man as he was in the flesh, it is mere self-limitation not to make use of all the light it can give us on what he wrote, modifying our final sensation as is fitting.

Now, it is to be always remembered in regard to Buckle that he was not a trained literary man ; that, as before remarked, he had had no variety of literary practice, and that his one great sortie into the light and air of public

criticism was his first. This one fact would go far to account not only for laxities of phrase and laxities of argument but for such a general miscalculation of tone as I have ascribed to him in respect of his pitch of declamation. The man who addresses a large meeting without having previously spoken at a meeting at all is apt either to be inaudible or to shout; the first being the fault of unfitness and the second that of untrained energy. Buckle had abundant brain energy; but his preparation was entirely ideal—a notable mistake in the case of a man who laid such stress on practicality. And whereas a very well-poised man, with none of the excessiveness which belongs to genius, may make a first attempt blamelessly, because colourlessly, the man of genius is pretty sure to do it faultily because of his genius. It was so with Buckle,<sup>1</sup> who was a man of unrobust frame, a physique ill fitted for prolonged toil but determinedly subjected to such toil, an irregular heart-action, and a warm and enthusiastic temperament, combined with an immense avidity for universal knowledge and for general ideas. It is a curious fact that this cyclopean book-builder, who moves such masses of knowledge, and plans so gigantically their places, was as a child so sickly that he could not be schooled, so that he probably owed his final strength of brain to the wise advice of Birkbeck to his parents, that he should not be taxed with any task-work whatever. He grew up untrained, reading only for his own pleasure, and learning no languages save his mother tongue. At nineteen he knew no other. And yet he had then already reached the conception of his life's work, which involved learning as many languages as he then had years. So much may an abnormal brain do which gets the right conditions for its curative growth. And when we admit that Buckle missed what disciplinary good the school and the university can yield to youth, we must

<sup>1</sup> In his writing, that is, not in his public speaking. He was in fact remarkably gifted as a speaker, in respect at once of an extremely musical voice, a habit of recitation, and an abundant fluency and continuity of thought. As to his lecture at the Royal Institution, given without any notes, see the *Life*, i. 256, and Froude, *Short Studies*, as cited.

not forget that he probably was what he finally was in part because he wholly escaped the averaging influence of the English public school and university training, so strangely potent for the destruction or restriction of all originality of mind.

It was not so much the lack of rough-and-tumble schooling and university life that told against Buckle's preparation, as the lack of practice in exposition and in hand-to-hand discussion—a lack which need not have been involved by the other, though it connected with that. He was not in the least a milksop; his temper had all the manliness which we like in Macaulay's; and he developed no moral shortcomings through his domestic upbringing with an adoring mother. But his home-staying life in his boyhood became the type of his intellectual life; and though he had many good friends and intimate relatives, it does not appear from Mr Huth's biography of him that in the important years of adolescence he had the bracing experience of intellectual companionship with energetic and critical minds of his own age. It does not appear that his "iron" was sharpened as the proverb says friendly strife may do. He loved to dine with his friends, and to talk at dinner; but we learn<sup>1</sup> that he was considered to be too much given to carrying on a discussion systematically and persistently. That is to say, he did not meet his peers at dinner; and if he tried the patience of some, it was doubtless with a not very arduous dialectic. Only by a careful process of selection could he—the son of a reserved man of business who was devoted to the Church of England, and of an invalid and Calvinistic mother; with neither school friends nor college friends nor studious acquaintances to draw on—have met in dining-out London the minds which could have given him in intercourse the exercise and the criticism that would have served to correct his oversights.<sup>2</sup> And he does not seem ever to have made the search. Only towards the end of his life does he seem to have had

<sup>1</sup> Miss Shireff's *Reminiscences*, quoted by Miss Tylor in *Misc. Works*, i.

<sup>2</sup> See the *Life*, i. 310.

an opportunity of meeting Mill, whom he enthusiastically admired ; and he was then so weak in health that he shrank from the excitement of the encounter. So it was in regard to the visit of Theodore Parker. Mr Huth gives us a number of his letters to women friends, and one or two written to men of ability who criticised his book in talk with him ; but there is nothing to show that he ever tried conclusions with able and independent thinkers in free intercourse during the seventeen years in which his book was being made. His women friends were studious and intelligent, but they were rather disciples than critics.

All this while too he was deliberately refraining from tentative literary production. He had an intense ambition, and at the same time so full a control over it that he would spend no time on anything save the great work which was to be his monument. And if we decide, as indeed we must, on the one hand that he thus missed a part of literary and intellectual training for which nothing can compensate, and which he ought to have seen to be requisite to first-rate performance, we must remember that on the other hand he was conscious of fragile health and straitly bounded physical powers. As it was, he had carefully studied the theory of writing ; had practised in juvenile fashion the rendering of passages of standard authors in his own style ; reading widely in *belles lettres* as in every other field of literature ; delighting endlessly in Shakspeare, by whom his boyhood had been intellectually fed and stimulated ; systematically checking his reading in all directions ; following all new discussions in the sciences and on history ; travelling with his eyes and ears open ; and even finding time for good contemporary novels ; always alert, always alive, doing what a man may to prepare himself for practice without practising. It was a superb undertaking ; and they must have small gift of sympathy who refuse to applaud it ; but it had its due drawbacks.

Another obstacle to perfect performance lay for him in the very breadth of his mind and the extraordinary abundance of his interests. No man in our time seems

so spontaneously to have "taken all knowledge to be his province." All sciences came alike to his insatiable curiosity; he delighted in following them all round as most men follow a single hobby. Indeed, if he had not been vowed to sociology, he could hardly have failed to do much for some of the physical sciences, so masterly is his grasp of them in their main bearings, so forward-looking his estimate of their present standpoint and possibilities. But to keep abreast of the results of half-a-dozen sciences and modern philosophy, and to keep up over a dozen languages, and at the same time to co-ordinate successively great groups of historical facts and relate the results to the sciences and to philosophy—this is a task which only a man fired with a supreme enthusiasm would dare to contemplate. He made his plan of study so vast that only a frame as massive as his brain could have borne the toil of it: whereas his body was feeble from birth. A few years of work did actually teach him the utter hopelessness of his first visionary scheme, and he restricted it as we have seen; but still he held to an ideal of qualification which called for a long life to labour in. And with this ideal there went an endless discursiveness in the fulfilment of the manifold task. He himself sees on suggestion and frankly admits,<sup>1</sup> when his Introduction is partly in print, that his discursiveness is disproportionate to his task; but already his health is dangerously shaken. It is grievous, as the latter years go on, to see the flawed organism reeling under the heroic strain that has been put upon it. With all his science, he remains one of the many proofs that the men who should smoke least tend spontaneously to smoke most; since he was a hard smoker with a weak heart. Again and again a warning swoon strikes him down. In June of 1856 he fell down insensible in Hyde Park; and he began to be alarmed about his powers.<sup>2</sup> In September of 1858, while his mother is still alive, he declares himself "remarkably well and able to work with perfect comfort upwards of eight hours." But as she grew daily worse,

<sup>1</sup> *Life*, i. 140.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*, pp. 110, 127.



his anxiety for her shook his health more and more till, as her mind begins to fail her, he had at times to go out of the house to contain himself.<sup>1</sup> He had given her the full energy of an affection<sup>2</sup> as abundant as his mental life; and she in turn had long been held to life more by the intense desire to see his great book appear than by any remaining strength. The story of her speechless delight on seeing the first volume, with its dedication to her, is one of the most touching in literary history. At length the end came, and it seems as if from that day he was already a broken man. In June of 1859 his relatives were seriously alarmed for him; in August he "accidentally fell downstairs and fainted away." One blow came upon another. The death of his favourite nephew, a boy of remarkable promise, to whom he had arranged to bequeath his library, followed close on the loss of his mother, and he began to feel terribly alone. The "conceited irreligious man" of George Eliot's censorious fancy was at all times a creature of deep human affections, and he suffered intensely from their wounds. "I keep my affections alive by reading Shakspeare," he sadly said to a friend. Of his mother he could not directly speak;<sup>3</sup> but the friend has told how the full mind, stored with all the treasures of literature, would pour itself out in strangely moving recitals of long passages of verse, given with perfect accuracy of recollection, from Corneille, from Milton, or from his ever-revered Shakspeare, while the trembling body could hardly sustain the vibration of its feelings.<sup>4</sup> Still he would rally with a singular buoyancy; and by way of resting his mind, and so restoring his bodily strength, he planned his journey to the East, taking with him the two boys of whom one has become his biographer. Only by occupying himself with the business of travel could he withhold himself from his exhausting studies. But when fever caught him on the journey, though he seems

<sup>1</sup> *Id.*, p. 282.

<sup>2</sup> He had one or two love affairs with cousins in early youth; but, these being put an end to by family wisdom, he remained for the rest of his life as free as Macaulay from the distractions of the great passion.

<sup>3</sup> Pp. 97-98.

<sup>4</sup> Pp. 52-53.

to have regained much elasticity and good spirits, and managed the then difficult and not dangerless business of desert travel with energy and success, he had only a shattered physique with which to resist disease and old-world doctors. He fought the malady long after it had clutched him, travelling with the fever on him as few men of twice his physical strength would have done. So much can brain do. Again and again it would seem as if he might have been cured by competent hands: but always we feel the force of his cry of the year before: "I am never a week without feeling that I have a body. If I were a strong man, I would do something."<sup>1</sup> And so he died at Damascus, only forty years old. It does not appear from Mr Huth's biography that it was on his deathbed he uttered the cry "My book,"<sup>2</sup> which has elicited from Mr Ruskin an odious reprimand:<sup>3</sup> those dramatic deathbed utterances are seldom historical. But to his high ambition the thought of the unfinished book, the nearest thing left him, must indeed have been "wild with all regret."

It is not only, however, the spectacle of his physical course that tends to alter the feeling with which we note what seem to us the defects of his great performance. This weak-bodied scholar, with his large affections and his high aims, felt warmly on all the themes of his survey, and was continuously eloquent because he was continuously thinking at a high imaginative pressure. Mrs Huth, who came so to know him and trust him that she let him take her two boys to Palestine, has told how at first he seemed to her "a cold, unfeeling man, with no sympathy for individuals, and caring only for what was beneficial for mankind as a mass." The "only" here expresses a very common way of judging, with men as well as with women. When she read his account of Burke, she "began to take a different view, but still thought that his tenderness could be roused only by individuals of extraordinary intellectual powers." With increasing intercourse she became puzzled: she prepared budgets of questions for him, "and the kind-

<sup>1</sup> *Life*, ii. 62.

<sup>2</sup> Above referred to, p. 73.

<sup>3</sup> *Fors Clavigera*, viii. 76.

ness, patience, care, and sympathy with which he answered greatly astonished me." At length she decided "that there were two Buckles—one cold and unfeeling as Fate; who invariably took the highest and widest view; to whom the good of the individual was as nothing compared to the good of the mass. This man was heard in the *History of Civilisation*, and at dinner-tables where many people were present. The other Buckle was tender, and capable of feeling every vibration of a little child's heart; self-sacrificing to a degree which he would have blamed in another; and habitually concentrating his great intellect on the consequences of individual actions to the actor."<sup>1</sup> Even this very valuable estimate is too feminine to be final. The identification of the "highest and widest view" with coldness and want of feeling is an error in expression. For Buckle the highest and widest view was itself really a state of impassioned perception; and he glows with the thrill of an intellectual demonstration as spontaneously as he burns into wrath over the record of the clammy cruelties of the Puritan inquisitors in the Kirk of Scotland. His rhetoric, then, is the rhetoric of a readily moved man, in whom the brain and the emotional system are alike remarkably developed, a man not at all typically English, inasmuch as he combined the feelings of an emotional type with the reflectiveness of the most studious type. The combination recalls the sombre theory of recent years that all genius is pathological—a theory of which the half-truth is best rectified by asking whether any line has ever been successfully drawn between the pathological and the healthy in the day's work of the most ordinary man, so as to free it from medical demur. There is so much pathology without genius that the latter may well be spared the invidious identification. What is true of Buckle is that in him all scientific perception readily approached the poetic or emotive stage: hence at once the general height of his pitch of language and the relative inexactness of his expression where a rigid or even frigid exactness is

<sup>1</sup> *Life*, ii. 42-43.

demanding by the scientific mood. It was not for nothing that his fragile youth was nourished on Shakspeare, and that he carried in his head scores of pages of poetry. He all the while points, indeed, to the poetic material contained in the new science of life; and that he only tends toward and does not attain the properly poetic expression of it is a necessity, on the one hand, of the predominantly scientific nature of his work and his purpose, and due on the other hand to the fact that he was not original and innovating in the art of speech as he was in the greater art of historic interpretation. On the strictly literary side he is a man of great brain energy, eagerly interested in all things intellectual, but with little more than an average faculty for expression as distinguished from abundance of ideas and animation and fluency. Were it otherwise, indeed, he could not conceivably have kept silence during those seventeen years of preparation. His mission was not to say things so much as to see them, and put others in the way of seeing.

And the extent to which he consciously relied on imaginative fervour for the promotion of scientific knowledge is so remarkable that it should here be specially noted. It is indeed in the last section of his fragment, written when he was most unstrung, that he gives the strongest wording to his feelings on the point; but the passage is only an intenser expression of what he always tended to think. He tells<sup>1</sup> how Leslie avowed the aid he actually derived from poetry in his scientific reasonings, and adds: "for he knew that the poets are, in their own manner, consummate observers,<sup>2</sup> and that their united observations form a treasury of truths which are nowise inferior to the truths of science, and of which science must either avail herself or else suffer from neglecting them." But it is on a much less tangible basis than Leslie's employment of poetic ideas in his hypotheses on light and heat that Buckle founds his strongest utterance of this kind. It is after citing a not very instructive speculation of Black on

<sup>1</sup> III. 385.

<sup>2</sup> See the notes for the class of instances in view.

the effects that would follow on an increase of the earth's heat by its "creator" that he turns to censure the unimaginativeness of English science.

"In England especially there is, among physical inquirers, an avowed determination to separate philosophy from poetry, and to look upon them not only as different, but as hostile. Among that class of thinkers, whose zeal and ability are beyond all praise, and to whom we owe almost unbounded obligations, there does undoubtedly exist a very strong opinion that, in their own pursuit, the imagination is extremely dangerous, as leading to speculations, of which the basis is not yet assured, and generating a desire to catch too eagerly at distant glimpses before the intermediate ground has been traversed. That the imagination has this tendency is undeniable. But they who object to it on this account, and who would therefore divorce poetry from philosophy, have, I apprehend, taken a too limited view of the functions of the human mind, and of the manner in which truth is obtained. There is, in poetry, a divine and prophetic power, and an insight into the turn and aspect of things, which if properly used, would make it the ally of science instead of the enemy. By the poet, nature is contemplated on the side of the emotions ; by the man of science, on the side of the understanding. But the emotions are as much a part of us as the understanding ; they are as truthful ; they are as likely to be right. Though their view is different, it is not capricious. They obey fixed laws ; they follow an orderly and uniform course ; they run in sequences ; they have their logic and method of inference. Poetry, therefore, is a part of philosophy, simply because the emotions are part of the mind. If the man of science despises their teaching, so much the worse for him. He has only half his weapons ; his arsenal is unfilled. Conquests, indeed, he may make, because his native strength may compensate the defects of his equipment. But his success would be more complete and more rapid if he were properly furnished and made ready for the battle. And I cannot but regard as the worst intellectual symptom of this great country, what I must venture to call the imperfect education of physical philosophers, as exhibited both in their writings and in their train of thought. This is the more serious because they as a body form the most important class in England, whether we look at their ability, or at the benefits we have received from them, or at the influence they are exercising, and are likely to exercise, over the progress of society. It cannot however be concealed, that they display an inordinate respect for experiments, an undue love of minute detail, and a disposition to overrate the invention of new instruments and the discoverers of new but often insignificant facts. Their predecessors of the seventeenth century, by using hypotheses more boldly, and by indulging their imagina-

tion more frequently, did certainly effect greater things, in comparison with the then state of knowledge, than our contemporaries with much superior resource have been able to achieve. The magnificent generalisations of Newton and Harvey could never have been completed in an age absorbed in one unvarying round of experiments and observations. We are in that predicament, that our facts have outstripped our knowledge, and are now encumbering its march. The publications of our scientific institutions, and of our scientific authors, overflow with minute and countless details, which perplex the judgment, and which no memory can retain. In vain do we demand that they should be generalised, and reduced into order. Instead of that, the heap continues to swell. We want ideas, and we get more facts. We hear constantly of what nature is doing, but we rarely hear of what man is thinking. Owing to the indefatigable industry of this and the preceding century, we are in possession of a huge and incoherent mass of observations, which have been stored up with great care, but which, until they are connected by some presiding idea, will be utterly useless. The most effective way of turning them to account would be to give more scope to the imagination, and incorporate the spirit of poetry with the spirit of science. By this means, our philosophers would double their resources, instead of working, as now, maimed, and with only half their nature. They fear the imagination, on account of its tendency to form hasty theories. But surely all our faculties are needed in the pursuit of truth, and we cannot be justified in discrediting any part of the human mind. And I can hardly doubt that one of the reasons why we in England made such wonderful discoveries during the seventeenth century, was because that century was also the great age of English poetry. The two mightiest intellects our country has produced are Shakspeare and Newton; and that Shakspeare should have preceded Newton, was, I believe, no casual or unmeaning event. Shakspeare and the poets sowed the seed, which Newton and the philosophers reaped. Discarding the old scholastic and theological pursuits, they drew attention to nature, and thus became the real founders of all natural science. They did even more than this. They first impregnated the mind of England with bold and lofty conceptions. They taught the men of their generation to crave after the unseen. They taught them to pine for the ideal, and rise above the visible world of sense. In this way, by cultivating the emotions, they opened one of the paths which lead to truth. The impetus which they communicated survived their own day, and, like all great movements, was felt in every department of thought. But now it is gone; and, unless I am greatly mistaken, physical science is at present suffering from its absence. Since the seventeenth century, we have had no poet of the highest order, though Shelley, had he lived, would perhaps have become one.

He had something of that burning passion, that sacred fire, which kindles the soul as though it came fresh from the altar of the gods. But he was cut off in his early prime, when his splendid genius was still in its dawn. If we except his immature though marvellous efforts, we may assuredly say that for nearly two hundred years England has produced no poetry which bears those unmistakable marks of inspiration which we find in Spenser, in Shakspeare, and in Milton. The result is that we, separated by so long an interval from those great feeders of the imagination, who nurtured our ancestors, and being unable to enter fully into the feelings of poets who wrote when nearly all opinions, and therefore nearly all forms of emotion, were very different to what they now are, cannot possibly sympathise with those immortal productions so closely as their contemporaries did. The noble English poetry of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries is read more than ever, but it does not colour our thoughts ; it does not shape our understandings as it shaped the understandings of our forefathers. Between us and them is a chasm, which we cannot entirely bridge. We are so far removed from the associations amid which those poems were composed, that they do not flash upon us with that reality and distinctness of aim which they would have done, had we lived when they were written. Their garb is strange, and belongs to another time. Not merely their dialect and their dress, but their very complexion and their inmost sentiments, tell of bygone days of which we have no firm hold. There is, no doubt, a certain ornamental culture, which the most highly educated persons receive from the literature of the past, and by which they sometimes refine their taste, and sometimes enlarge their ideas. But the real culture of a great people, that which supplies each generation with its principal strength, consists of what is learnt from the generation immediately preceding. Though we are often unconscious of the process, we build nearly all our conceptions on the basis recognised by those who went just before us. Our closest contact is, not with our forefathers, but with our fathers. To them we are linked by a genuine affinity, which, being spontaneous, costs us no effort, and from which, indeed, we cannot escape. We inherit their notions, and modify them, just as they modified the notions of their predecessors. At each successive modification, something is lost and something is gained, until at length the original type almost disappears. Therefore it is that ideas entertained several generations ago, bear about the same relation to us as ideas preserved in a foreign literature. In both cases, the ideas may adorn our knowledge, but they are never so thoroughly incorporated with our minds as to be the knowledge itself. The assimilation is incomplete because the sympathy is incomplete. We have now no great poets ; and our poverty in this respect is not compensated by the fact that we once had them, and that we may, and do, read their works. The movement has gone by ; the

charm is broken ; the bond of union, though not cancelled, is seriously weakened. Hence, our age, great as it is, and in nearly all respects greater than any the world has yet seen, has, notwithstanding its large and generous sentiments, its unexampled toleration, its love of liberty, and its profuse and almost reckless charity, a certain material, unimaginative, and unheroic character, which has made several observers tremble for the future. So far as I can understand our present condition, I do not participate in these fears, because I believe that the good we have already gained is beyond all comparison greater than what we have lost. But that something has been lost is unquestionable. We have lost much of that imagination which, though in practical life it often misleads, is in speculative life one of the highest of all qualities, being suggestive as well as creative. Even practically we should cherish it, because the commerce of the affections mainly depends on it. It is, however, declining ; while at the same time the increasing refinement of society accustoms us more and more to suppress our emotions, lest they should be disagreeable to others. And, as the play of the emotions is the chief study of the poet, we see in this circumstance another reason which makes it difficult to rival that great body of poetry which our ancestors possessed. Therefore it is doubly incumbent on physical philosophers to cultivate the imagination. It is a duty they owe to their own pursuits, which would be enriched and invigorated by such an enlargement of their resources. It is also a duty which they owe to society in general ; since they, whose intellectual influence is already greater than that of any other class, and whose authority is perceptibly on the increase, might have power enough to correct the most serious deficiency of the present age, and to make us some amends for our inability to produce such a splendid imaginative literature as that which our forefathers created, and in which the choicest spirits of the seventeenth century did, if I may so say, dwell and have their being."<sup>1</sup>

I do not attempt to justify the judgments or the reasoning here. The ignoring of Keats<sup>2</sup> in an estimate of modern English poetry is an unpardonable miscarriage ; the summary dismissal of the claims of Wordsworth and Coleridge, above all in such a connection as this, is only a less flagrant error ; and the career of Tennyson and Browning finally disposes of the entire sociological pro-

<sup>1</sup> III. 377-382.

<sup>2</sup> He equally ignored Alfred de Musset in estimating French poetry. *Life*, ii. 61. It should be remembered however that in the early fifties Taine had not learned to see Musset's value. *Cp. La Fontaine et ses Fables*, 7<sup>e</sup> édit., p. 42, and note, and *Hist. de la Litt. Anglaise*, v. 466-470.



position. It is clear enough that Buckle in the matter of poetry was very much such a past-worshipper as the average man had hitherto been in creed,—a fact clearly correlative with the ordinariness of his style or manner. Nor will I attempt to defend with any exactness the underlying proposition as to the bearing of the poetic faculty on the scientific, though that is a more hopeful thesis.<sup>1</sup> The point of it is that we are dealing with a mind

<sup>1</sup> It was sufficiently common before Buckle's time, and may be said to originate with Aristotle: "Poetry is more philosophic, and more deserving of attention, than history. For poetry speaks more of universals, but history of particulars" (*Poetics*, ix.). This (misquoted) is endorsed and amplified by Wordsworth, in the preface to the second edition of the *Lyrical Ballads*. He argues on the one hand that the Poet "converses with general nature, with affections akin to those which, through labour and length of time, the man of science has raised up in himself by conversing with those particular parts of nature which are the objects of his studies;" and on the other hand that "The remotest discoveries of the Chemist, the Botanist, or Mineralogist will be as proper objects of the Poet's art as any upon which it can be employed, if the time should ever come when these things shall be familiar to us"—two very different propositions. Shelley, again, beginning his *Defence of Poetry* with the very scientific distinction of literary processes into two sorts, one τὸ ποιεῖν, or the principle of synthesis (=poetry) the other τὸ λογίζειν, or principle of analysis (=science), proceeds to make out that all the great historians are poets; that "the true poetry of Rome lived in its institutions;" that moralistic poets weaken their poetry in the measure of their moralising; and a number of other ill-related propositions. Among them occurs the thesis that "We want the creative faculty to imagine that which we know": "our calculations have outrun conception; we have eaten more than we can digest," with the result that our mechanical discoveries have rather increased than lessened misery—Buckle's thesis turned to a very different account. Poe, again, declared in the preface to his *Eureka*, perhaps the most powerful theistic treatise in English literature: "It is as a poem only that I wish this work to be judged after I am dead." Yet again, Taine, in his youthful treatise on *La Fontaine et ses Fables* (éd. 7<sup>e</sup>, pp. 345-6) urges that the poet (and such a poet as La Fontaine) is the most comprehensive of all thinkers. "Car il est à la fois philosophe et peintre, et il ne nous montre jamais les causes générales sans les petits faits sensibles qui les manifestent, ni les petits faits sensibles sans les causes générales qui les ont produits." It is safe to say that all of the utterances cited, with Buckle's, create needless confusion by rashly expanding the just saying of Wordsworth (Pref. to 2nd ed. of *Lyrical Ballads*) that poetry is "the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge: it is the impassioned expression which is in the countenance of all Science." The confusion is sufficiently proved by the significant fact that every one of the writers cited has contradicted, either explicitly or implicitly, the passage cited from him. Thus Aristotle, after making it the poet's province to relate "not

of a distinctly poetic and impassioned cast, though without the special faculty of poetic utterance, applied to a great scientific task.

things that have happened, but such as might have happened," proceeds to limit straitly the matter of tragedy, stipulating for a single plot, and strict poetic justice (*Id.*, xiii.), thus making the highest form of poetry much less "universal" than history. Buckle, as we have seen above, repeatedly disparages *belles lettres* in passages (i. 237; ii. 8, 205) irreconcilable with his dithyramb on poetry. Wordsworth, just before making poetry and science differ only as general and particular studies of Nature, and after making the admirable generalisation above cited, lays it down, in a footnote, that the proper antithesis to Poetry is not Prose but "Matter of Fact, or Science"—a definition which he probably borrowed from Coleridge (see the *Lectures*, Bohn ed., p. 183, and *Biog. Lit.*, ch. xiv., Bohn ed., p. 148), who also defined Poetry (compare *Biog. Lit.*, ch. xv., Bohn ed., p. 155; Ashe's ed. of the *Miscellanies*, pp. 10, 347; and *Table Talk*, July 12, 1827, July 3, 1833, May 8, 1824, Aug. 11, 1832) sometimes as philosophic thought, and sometimes as a verbal art. Shelley again, counters his own account of poetry flatly enough in a letter to Peacock (Jan. 26, 1819): "I consider poetry very subordinate to moral and political science, and if I were well, certainly I would aspire to the latter." Poe, next, though in some respects the closest and ablest thinker of all, contradicts himself to an extraordinary extent. In his lecture on "The Poetic Principle" (*Works*, Ingram's ed., iii. 202) he insists that the modes of inculcation of Truth should be limited, because "all *that* which is so indispensable in Song, is precisely all *that* with which *she* has nothing whatever to do. . . . In enforcing a truth, we need severity rather than efflorescence of language. . . . We must be cool, calm, unimpassioned," and so on; (cp. Coleridge, *Lectures*, as cited); and he declares no less emphatically (p. 197) that a poem proper cannot be longer than half-an-hour's reading will cover. Yet his *Eureka*, which he later claimed to be a poem, is not only declared by him to be a Book of Truths, but is throughout closely and scientifically reasoned, and fills over a hundred pages. Nor is even this contradiction much greater than that implied between Taine's estimate of poetry à propos of La Fontaine and his general treatment of poetic work of much greater lift and reach in his later writings. Poe, finally, supplies the key to all these contradictions, when, in his essay above cited (p. 204), he notes that "the poetic sentiment, of course, may develop itself in various modes,—in painting, in sculpture, in architecture, in the dance, very especially in music . . . and in the composition of the landscape garden." All these, in fact, come under Shelley's *τὸ ποεῖν*. But, for mere purposes of identification, the word Poetry necessarily comes to be limited to what Poe calls "The Poetry of Words," the purpose of which is "the *rhythmical* creation of Beauty." And this specialised Poetry it is that is properly to be contrasted, as by Wordsworth and Coleridge, with Matter of Fact, or Science, though on the other hand it can proceed upon science as raw material, and be further akin in motive to the leap of thought by which the scientist reaches to a generalisation. But this is a somewhat different proposition from Buckle's and Taine's; and it leaves us

Thus Buckle's scientific performance is of a piece with his personal life and character. His book is quite intelligibly the book of the man who loved children, who "could never refuse anything" to them, and whom all children loved and trusted. And the man of wide and general views is temperamentally just the man who made the passionate attack on Sir John Coleridge for his ferocious sentence on the half-witted labourer Thomas Pooley. This poor man, crack-brained but harmless, happened to combine craziness with aversion instead of devotion to the Bible; and he once scrawled on a gate some words of ribald contempt against Christ and Christianity, for which offence Mr Justice Coleridge (the father of the late Lord-Chief-Justice) sentenced him to twenty-one months' imprisonment, though his character for honesty, industry, and sobriety was unimpeached. From prison he had soon to be sent to the madhouse; whence he was released after some months on a "pardon," granted on the ground of insanity; but only after one petition on his behalf had been refused, and there was a prospect of the matter being publicly agitated. The fact of the sentence, which had been passed in 1857, Buckle only learned in 1859, with extreme astonishment, from Mill's essay on *Liberty*. Mill had commented feelingly; but Buckle's blood boiled on reading the story; and after a careful investigation, he made in his essay on Mill's book a vehement attack on the judge, whom he pronounced unjust and unrighteous, and guilty of a gross iniquity. It was a good stroke, well deserved, well and righteously struck, and the status of the hitter made it tell to the utmost. The judge was indig-

concluding that history-writing is not appropriately to be termed poetry, as by Shelley, any more than is Poe's argumentative treatise, impassioned though it be. The discrimination cannot be more poetically made than in Mr Watson's lines:

"Song is not Truth, not Wisdom, but the rose  
Upon Truth's lips, the light in Wisdom's eyes."

This puts by image more of the truth than the tersely good definition of Ebenezer Elliott: "Poetry is impassioned truth" (cited and developed by Mill, *Diss. and Disc.*, i. 70).

nant ; his son, who had been prosecuting counsel in the case, wrote in his defence<sup>1</sup>; and a great many of Buckle's own friends seem to have condemned him for his "violence." Their attitude was what may usually be expected from upper-class people in England, with their abundant sympathy for a judge of high standing whose cruelty is impeached as wickedness, and their ready tolerance for the cruelty itself when it is wreaked on a person at once insignificant and objectionable. The judge's defence was, forsooth, that it had in no way been represented to him that Pooley was crazy. As if his sentence would have been any the less abominable had Pooley been only a fool instead of a semi-madman. As a matter of fact, Pooley's derangement seems to have been visible to everyone else in court, and the judge was simply gratifying his own religious malice. That brutality of resentment the judge's class were ready either to applaud or to condone as at most an indiscretion, not to be compared with the offence of the poor devil who had scrawled an incoherent blasphemy on a gate; and Buckle's generous wrath was in comparison an atrocious breach of propriety. Had Pooley been a Bibliolator, mad or otherwise, and had he sent to Buckle or any other heretic a letter of Biblical abuse, or had he scrawled on the gate an insanity or indecency from the Bible instead of one of his own, the Christian judge would no more have thought of sending him to jail than of

<sup>1</sup> This defence, the writer of which lived to be Lord-Chief-Justice of England, is a forensic though indignant piece of writing, which, as Buckle retorted, made great play with a refutation of charges that he had not made, and carefully avoided any statement of the length of the imprisonment to which Pooley was sentenced. The young advocate thought fit to represent Buckle as having insinuated that there had been a "private understanding" between him and his father, when there was no word of such a suggestion in Buckle's attack. To the son's defence and counter-attack, which appeared as a letter to *Fraser's Magazine* (where Buckle's essay on Mill's book was first published), Buckle replied with crushing force in a short pamphlet, as tersely trenchant as the advocate's letter was diffuse. The Coleridges made no further demonstration. It is not unlikely that it was the impression made in this matter on the younger that in later life made him, albeit himself an emotional pietist, so anxious as a judge to avoid every semblance of persecution of free-thinkers. See the *Life of Charles Bradlaugh*, ii. 333, 352-354.

capping quotations with him. In such a case, indeed, the offender would never have been brought into court. The whole matter, on the religious side, was simply an expression of the animal malignity into which from time immemorial orthodox piety has always transformed itself in the face of any denial or derision of its dogmas. Buckle does not seem to have been applauded by anybody even in his own circle: everybody was concerned only for the hurt feelings of Mr Justice Coleridge. Buckle moved among people who expressed their surprise that he did not put on mourning for the Duchess of Kent when "everybody" did.<sup>1</sup> He had indeed put himself on the plane of such criticism in his youth by getting presented at Court as a means of getting into "good society." Such was the upper-class England of his day: a world abounding in mean ideals and vain satisfactions. The wonder is that amid it all he grew into a manly spirit and developed a worthy philosophy. His world must indeed have had more worth in it than appears from these points of contact: he was not the man to consort all his life with mere respectable triviality. But he stands out from it not so much hampered in philosophy by its limitations as shaking them off in virtue at once of his nobler sympathies and his incomparably wider thought. We do not realise him aright if we do not remember that this indignant attack on tyrannous power came from him when his own heart was wrung by the intimate grief of his mother's loss. Neither scientific breadth of view nor personal pain could chill in him the passion of justice and the enthusiasm of humanity.

In the light of his physique, again, his doctrine of the worse than uselessness of protective State action to help either workers or thinkers takes on a less repellent air than is given it where he censures penniless writers for their improvidence. It is not only that the widely studious man is apt to recoil from schemes of action which involve generations of friction and reconstruction. This indeed

<sup>1</sup> *Life*, ii. 54.

counts for much ; and we can hear in Buckle's letters, deprecating new social and political agitations,<sup>1</sup> the note of physical inefficiency and nerve for action which we detect in his portrait. That has the slack mouth of the man of no action, no gymnastic in affairs ; with the luminous eye and massive brain of the copious thinker. "Thought expands, but lames," says Goethe. But there is a further explanation in Buckle's case. We learn from his biography not only that he was wont to take much pains to investigate appeals for charity, and to help the "deserving," but that he was awake to the vast anomaly of wealth and poverty. "It is not right," he avowed, "that any man should have two thousand pounds a year and his housemaid only twenty." His cure was of the *laissez-faire* order ; but he noted that "It would avail nothing were a few well-meaning persons to give their servants higher wages."<sup>2</sup> It may be surmised that his denial of the utility of State action was in the circumstances the result of his own sense of need for a doctrine which would scientifically absolve riches of responsibility for misery. For it is very certain that to many wealthy people the belief that it is impossible to get rid of poverty by systematic action serves to relieve the pressure of the uneasy questioning which obtrusive poverty sets up ; and those who are thus relieved are not the least sympathetic people. The heartless ones need no relief inasmuch as they suffer no uneasiness. Nor is it peculiar to the possessors of unearned incomes to seek to find in economics the scientific sanction for the state of things in which they are well off. Adam Smith laboured to provide for his own class a demonstration that to save money and live on the interest was the surest way to provide for the weal of the entire community ; and his fallacy is still the creed of most economists as well as most politicians. Even the strictly scientific argument of Malthus was turned by the more intelligent wealthy to the account, not of any educative policy for the restraint of population, but of maintaining the political *status quo*, and

<sup>1</sup> *Life*, i. 285 ; ii. 158.

<sup>2</sup> *Life*, ii. 57.

refusing all concession to the demands of political justice. And the failure of the democratic party thus far to assimilate the science of Malthus leaves the enemy in a fair way to use it against democracy in the future as in the past. Not till its economics is scientific all round need the democracy hope to gain its ends, whatever victories of votes it may score for empirical remedies.

Howsoever these things be, Buckle's failure to arrive at a science of constructive politics is clearly no such defect, relatively to the thought of his time, as could blot his name from the book of scientific remembrance. It is not given to the greatest to escape stumblings and oversights. The dismissal of his opinion on this head leaves a mass of durable doctrine such as no man in his generation, working at his problems, was able to put together. When we turn from the thought of what he failed to do to the thought of what he did, the sense of his power grows upon us till we are moved to salute him as we salute few men in a century. Even where he was not in the front of scientific thought, he was very far from being in the rear. We have seen him accused, unjustly enough,<sup>1</sup> of evading the deepest problem of his time, that is, the religious problem. What is true of him is that at a time when reviving sceptical thought was hesitatingly resuming the old process of substituting Pantheism for Theism, and a God of law for a God of miracles, providences, and answers to prayer, Buckle stated that view of things courageously and emphatically, even impeaching the normal Godism with a measure of indignation.<sup>2</sup> He was thus, be it observed, fully as far advanced as was Mr Spencer a few years earlier. At the same time, when reviving historical criticism was again taking up the problems of Christian origins, and the chemical method of Strauss and the sentimental method of Renan were making partly plain the incredibility of the central mythus, Buckle went the whole length of the present method and, as we have seen, protested that the Gospel ethics gave nothing new to the world. It was

<sup>1</sup> By Mr Stephen. See above, p. 62, *note*.

<sup>2</sup> III. 479-481.

doubtless his affectionate consideration for the feelings of his orthodox mother and sister that kept him in private in the habit of half-acquiescence in the merely adoring attitude towards the Gospel Jesus,<sup>1</sup> and made him hedge so anxiously over the anti-Christianity of the French emancipators of last century, and pronounce their Atheism a "degrading" opinion; as it was no doubt the same influences which kept him not only something of an anthropomorphic Theist but an emotional believer in a future state. His eager expression of this belief,<sup>2</sup> in a passage written soon after his mother's death, is too pathetic, in the light of the antecedents, to excite close criticism.<sup>3</sup> Rather we are led to note how thoroughly he had mastered the Kantian argument in favour of such beliefs,<sup>4</sup> the form to which all reasoning advocacy of them is always being driven back, and in which a whole school of Theists profess to find peace to-day. Few of the latter-day Kantists handle the theorem with his skill. And though the argument is finally either valid for nothing or valid for every fantasy, and is irreconcilable with Buckle's own conception of science, it is probably not those who have most openly dismissed it who will be most ready to belittle Buckle for having clung to it. They can best realise how much he grew out of,<sup>5</sup> and how much further he went in courageous opposition to dogma than the class which is most ready to sneer at him as an antiquated thinker. They can forgive, too, at this time of day, his cheap imputations of superficiality and degrading error against the men who went further than he; recognising that he had grown out of many of the prejudices he drew from his

<sup>1</sup> See the *Life*, ii. p. 225. Contrast p. 204.

<sup>2</sup> "Alas, alas!" writes Mr Huth, who yet seems to share the belief, "would that this proof were as clear to us as to his grief-wrought heart. . . . Yet it was no new idea with him, for he had already enunciated the thought in his first volume."—*Life*, i. 292; see Buckle, ii. 255.

<sup>3</sup> Essay on Mill's "Liberty," *Fraser's Magazine*, May 1859, p. 540. (The essay is reprinted in the *Miscellaneous Works*.)

<sup>4</sup> See his letter to Mrs Grey in the *Life*, i. 136.

<sup>5</sup> Compare his praise of Gibbon (i. 429, *note*) with the passage cited above (p. 349) from his notebooks.



religious parents, and that when forced to judge sociologically of the teachers whom he shrank from following, he always rose to the judicial temper. Indeed his treatment of the French *philosophes* compares favourably at points with those of some writers supposed to be more in sympathy with them, as Mr John Morley. We must try him with an eye to the general dissimulation and conformity of English life. That it was which made it possible for him to pen his singular remark<sup>1</sup> that "we rarely hear of a sincere Atheist being a zealous polemic"—a remark followed on the next leaf by the statement that "Atheism was openly advocated by Condorcet, by D'Alembert, by Diderot, by Helvétius, by Lalande, by Laplace, by Mirabeau, and by Saint Lambert," in the very period of which he speaks.

And when we turn from the issues on which his judgment was mastered by his emotions, to those on which his emotions did but quicken his judgment, we learn a weighty lesson on the conditions of intellectual performance. The source of a swerving from science at one point is the same fountain of emotion that at another lifts his thought to its loftiest sweep of vision. The criticism that he was not alive to the current developments of science reads oddly in the light of the thesis—partly borrowed indeed from a borrowed thesis of Coleridge—which he maintained concerning the unity of Nature.

"To those who are capable of a certain elevation and compass of thought, it will appear in the highest degree probable that between the organic and the inorganic world there is no real difference. That they are separated, as is commonly asserted, by a sharp line of demarcation, which indicates where one abruptly ends and the other abruptly begins, seems to be a supposition altogether untenable. Nature does not pause and break off in this fitful and irregular manner. In her works there is neither gap nor chasm. To a really scientific mind, the material world presents one vast and uninterrupted series, gradually rising from the lowest to the highest forms, but never stopping. In one part of that series, we find a particular structure, which so far as our observations have yet extended we in another part cannot find.

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<sup>1</sup> II. 350.

We also observe particular functions which correspond to the structure, and, as we believe, result from it. This is all we know. Yet from these scanty facts, we, who at present are still in the infancy of knowledge, and have but skimmed the surface of things, are expected to infer that there must be a point in the chain of existence where both structure and function suddenly cease, and after which we may vainly search for signs of life. It would be difficult to conceive a conclusion more repugnant to the whole march and analogy of modern thought. In every department the speculations of the greatest thinkers are constantly tending to coördinate all phenomena, and to regard them as different indeed in degree but by no means as different in kind. . . .

"When we moreover add that all science is manifestly converging towards one simple and general theory, which shall cover the whole range of material phenomena, and that at each successive step some irregularities are explained away and some inequalities are reduced, it can hardly be doubted that such a movement tends to weaken those old distinctions . . . and that in their place we must sooner or later substitute the more comprehensive view that life is a property of all matter, and that the classification of bodies into animate and inanimate, or into organic and inorganic, is merely a provisional arrangement, convenient perhaps for our present purposes, but which, like all similar divisions, will eventually be merged in a higher and wider scheme."<sup>1</sup>

Even here the thought is as much poetic as scientific; and in emphasising the valid doctrine, now demonstrated *a posteriori*, that there is no boundary line between the "organic" and the "inorganic," the formula runs the risk of making the word "life" meaningless, as is done by Coleridge (following Schelling) on *a priori* grounds,<sup>2</sup> of course not with any thought of admitting that one order of things may have been evolved on the basis of another with no supernatural intervention whatever. But despite the poetic laxity of the phrasing, Buckle had firmly seized the main principle, and had thus on his own lines come abreast of the most advanced evolutionary thought that was being developed around him. Indeed his incidental

<sup>1</sup> III. 406-410.

<sup>2</sup> See the "Theory of Life" in Mr Ashe's edition of the *Miscellanies*. Very different is the scientific method of Dr Radcliffe, whose *Vital Motion as a mode of Physical Motion* (Macmillan, 1876) deserves much more attention than it has received.

dicta call for a breadth of biological treatment which the practitioners have not yet reached. Thus he noted that while the best physiologists had already seen the necessity of including the lower animals and vegetable life in their science, "the pathologists, on the other hand, are so much in arrear, that the diseases of the lower animals rarely form part of their plan; while the diseases of plants are almost entirely neglected, although it is certain that until all these have been studied, and some steps taken to generalise them, every pathological conclusion will be eminently empirical, on account of the narrowness of the field from which it is collected."<sup>1</sup> Yet with all this breadth of speculation, and insistence upon it in others, Buckle combined a grasp of detail knowledge such as no man in these days seems to have equalled. He might conceivably have rivalled Whewell in a knowledge of the history of the sciences; and all the while he was a master of great fields of knowledge of which Whewell had no special command. It is one thing to detect and state his shortcomings at this point or that: it is another thing to follow his path through the masses of facts of all kinds which he has mastered and marshalled in great sweeps of historic survey. Beside his campaigns over the field of human affairs, the guarded and self-husbanding operations of half the specialists are as the movements of the generals of routine to those of the general of genius. It is with the average student as Wellington said it was with the average British general: if he got ten thousand men into Hyde Park he would be hard put to it to get them out again. And even the man who can manœuvre ten thousand men may be unable effectively to handle a hundred thousand, while it is only the greatest captains of all who can play the game of the hosts in which great armies are as regiments. It is needless here to make the moral contrast; but if we measure faculty by rarity of accomplishment, the

<sup>1</sup> III. 42. Professor Geddes's cellular theory of diseases of tissue is, I believe, the widest view yet taken of the problem. See his pamphlet, *A Restatement of the Cell Theory* (from Proc. of R. S., Edin., vol. xii.).

faculty seen at work in Buckle's book, and in his life, is as rare as that. If any man has more securely and more easily enrolled the multitudinous knowledge of mankind, and better commanded it to the service of organised knowledge, I cannot recall him. This man sits down to master indifferently a whole science, or a nation's language and literature and history, not to figure as a specialist in the matter, but to turn the whole study to the account of the fuller understanding of the laws of civilisation at work in the history of his own people. He might easily have ranked as a specialist on the history of Holland, of Spain, and of Scotland, so complete is his detail study for his general purpose. His scientific knowledge alone might have made of him a leading figure in the scientific world. We are dealing not with mere industry and talent, but with an abnormal capacity,<sup>1</sup> as obviously so in his studies as in his chess play. He had a faculty for chess which might have made him one of the great players of the world; and yet he took his chess play as mere recreation, strictly suspending it when he found it was hindering his possible progress with his book. Most of us might play chess for a lifetime without becoming able to win one game from such a player, to whom the struggle would be a cool amusement making no strain on his thinking powers. To go and play difficult chess for seven hours when he felt he could spare an afternoon was for Buckle's brain a holiday.<sup>2</sup> There goes the same exorbitant gift to build up his boundless knowledge; and it is not the isolated assaults of small sappers on real or imaginary weak points in his far-stretching fortifications that will destroy either the main positions or the memory of the builder.

And the last and not the least grace of greatness was also his; in that with all his just sense of the importance

<sup>1</sup> Mr Huth notes in his preface that before Buckle had published a line, "those to whom he wrote invariably kept even the most trivial of his notes," and that "so great was the friendship which he inspired, that in nearly every case the mere mention of his name after his death was sufficient introduction" between friends of his who had not previously met.

<sup>2</sup> See the *Life*, i. 105.

of his powers and performance he had the high cast of mind which can measure its own significance by the transcendent and inexorable tests of the ideal, the vast vista of the unachieved and the unknown. There are few more moving passages in cognate literature than that which he penned under the new sense of his limitations and his loneliness, when to physical weakness was added the loss of the sustaining affection of his life. It is doubly well worth quoting here, at the close of an attempt to show that his labours were not in vain. He begins it—perhaps it had been earlier begun—by stating not unhopefully the task and the possibilities of the historian of society who shall be sufficiently comprehensive in his view and sufficiently strenuous in his labours. He may succeed

“provided he devotes all his strength to that one enterprise, postponing to it every other object of ambition, and sacrificing to it many interests which men hold dear. Some of the most pleasurable incentives to action he must disregard. Not for him are those rewards which, in other pursuits, the same energy would have earned: not for him the sweets of popular applause; not for him the luxury of power; not for him a share in the councils of his country; not for him a conspicuous and honoured place before the public eye. . . . His recompense lies within himself, and he must learn to care little for the sympathy of his fellow-creatures, or for such honours as they are able to bestow. So far from looking for these things, he should rather be prepared for that obloquy which always awaits those who by opening up new veins of thought disturb the prejudices of their contemporaries. While ignorance, and worse than ignorance, is imputed to him, while his motives are misrepresented and his integrity impeached, while he is accused of denying the value of moral principles, and of attacking the foundation of all religion, as if he were some public enemy who made it his business to corrupt society, and whose delight it was to see what evil he could do, . . . he must be capable of pursuing in silence the even tenor of his way, without swerving, without pausing, and without stepping from his path to notice the angry outcries which he cannot but hear, and which he is more than human if he does not long to rebuke. These are the qualities, and these the high resolves, indispensable to him who, on the most important of all subjects, believing that the old road is worn out and useless, seeks to strike out a new one for himself, and in the effort not only perhaps exhausts his strength but is sure to incur the enmity of those who are bent on maintaining the ancient scheme unimpaired. To solve the great problem of affairs; to

detect those hidden circumstances which determine the march and destiny of nations ; and to find in the events of the past a key to the proceedings of the future, is nothing less than to unite into a single science all the laws of the moral and physical world. . . . Perchance the human mind is hardly ready for so vast an enterprise. At all events he who undertakes it will meet with little sympathy, and will find few to help him. And let him toil as he may, the sun and noon-tide of his life shall pass by, the evening of his days shall overtake him, and he himself have to quit the scene, leaving that unfinished which he had vainly hoped to complete. He may lay the foundation ; it will be for his successors to raise the edifice. Their hands will give the last touch ; they will reap the glory ; their names will be remembered when he is forgotten. It is indeed too true that such a work requires not only several minds, but also the successive experience of several generations. Once, I own, I thought otherwise. Once, when I first caught sight of the whole field of knowledge, and seemed, however dimly, to discern its various parts and the relation they bore to each other, I was so entranced with its surpassing beauty that the judgment was beguiled, and I deemed myself able not only to cover the surface but to master the details. Little did I know how the horizon enlarges as well as recedes, and how vainly we grasp at the fleeting forms which melt away and elude us in the distance. Of all that I had hoped to do, I now find but too surely how small a part I shall accomplish. In those early aspirations there was much that was fanciful ; perhaps there was much that was foolish. Perhaps too they contained a moral defect, and savoured of an arrogance which belongs to a strength that refuses to recognise its own weakness. Still, even now that they are defeated and brought to nought, I cannot repent having indulged in them, but on the contrary I would willingly recall them if I could. For such hopes belong to that joyous and sanguine period of life when alone we are really happy ; when the emotions are more active than the judgment ; when experience has not yet hardened our nature ; when the affections are not yet blighted and nipped to the core ; and when the bitterness of disappointment not having yet been felt, difficulties are unheeded, obstacles are unseen, ambition is a pleasure instead of a pang.<sup>1</sup> . . . Those are glorious days ; but they go from us, and nothing can compensate their absence. To me they now seem more like the visions of a disordered fancy than the sober realities of things that were and are not. It is painful to make this confession ; but I owe it to the reader, because I would not have him to suppose that in this or in the future volumes of my *History* I shall be able to redeem my pledge, and to perform all that

<sup>1</sup> Compare the passage in Burke's *Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, beginning, "In the morning of our days . . ." (Introd. *On Taste*, 5th ed., p. 20).

I promised. Something I hope to achieve which will interest the thinkers of this age ; and something perhaps on which posterity may build. It will however only be a fragment of my original design."<sup>1</sup>

It should not need these melancholy words to put us in the right state of mind for judging a dead man's curtailed achievement ; but the spirit of sympathetic justice is so rare a mood among those most wont to sit in judgment, that the passage must be pressed on the recollection of his readers. It is not an appeal *ad misericordiam* : it is rather a reminder that criticism itself is but a querulous outcry if it does not aim at taking into account all the circumstances of a case, even as the man who has here been criticised taught us to do in the larger investigations of universal history.

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Enough has now been done, perhaps, to set in a reasonably clear light the critical problem represented by the work of Buckle. It has been obscured more than most, I cannot but think, by careless handling ; and, rightly or wrongly, I have been impressed by a certain ungenerous wantonness of injustice in the matter, on the part of a number of critics whose position gives them a wide influence over public opinion, but who, as I have attempted to show, are not fully entitled to their authority. I can but ask the reader to note the process of argument by which it has been sought to decide the questions in dispute, giving me credit only for some judicial comparison of pros and cons, and for a certain measure of impartiality ; to which last I pretend on the score of sharing opinions that Buckle disliked and denounced.

There has been far too much play of mere "authority" in the discussion of the case hitherto ; and the extreme seems to be reached when writers with not a moiety of Buckle's information and orderliness of mind go about to dismiss him as uninstructed, hasty, amateurish. In final opposition to the "amateur" view, I would make this suggestion to the general student of history. Let him

<sup>1</sup> III. 187-189.

read Buckle carefully through (a thing seldom done, I fancy, by his critics), noting not only the narrative and the theory in the text, but the range of erudition and critical judgment in the notes ; let him once for all set down the general rhetorical element in the former—to say nothing in particular of the Theism—as a matter of form, and deal with the kernel rather than the husk ; let him at the close say whether he knows of any writer of Buckle's time or since who shows a more universal openness of mind to ideas, or a sounder and more independent judgment of writers of all sorts and calibres ; and let him say finally whether, on the vexed question of the philosophy of history, he has got any clearer and wider light from any one other writer than he has got from Buckle's series of generalisations, granting these to be not fully co-ordinated and at times mistaken. If he is what I understand by a materialist, I think I can anticipate his judgment ; if he is a transcendentalist, I cannot forecast it with any confidence. But I have a general confidence that as time goes on and men look at Buckle with the eyes of dispassionate science, unprepossessed by philosophies "held in solution," they will recognise in him one of the most suggestive and competent of modern writers on sociological questions. They will see, I think, that he had an extraordinarily quick appreciation of every sort of insight among his contemporaries—witness his footnote and other references to the earliest performances of Darwin, Spencer, Grove, and Lewes, not to speak of his praise of Comte, Carlyle, and Macaulay. They will recognise in his work a practical mastery of physical science, combined with a width of historic grasp, such as no other historian of his time can pretend to. They will be incapable of the blunder of setting him down as lacking in adaptability to the conception of evolution, merely because he did not do Darwin's work as well as his own ; they will see on the contrary that he had a very large share in preparing men's minds for the full adoption of the evolution principle. And though they may see readily enough the faults of form



which arose from the nature of Buckle's training, they will not improbably do as I venture to do now—recommend his book to young students as one the study of which, with all its faults, will widen, clarify, and methodise their notions of general history as no other book of these times can.

It has sometimes occurred to me to ask myself by way of a practical test of Buckle's power and importance, whether there is any living writer who could be trusted, not to carry out his whole scheme—that were too large a demand—but simply to complete his Introduction, handling the proposed problems of the intellectual development of Germany and the United States with such fullness of knowledge and mastery of material as Buckle has shown in his treatment of the intellectual history of France, Spain, and Scotland. It would be absurd to say there is nobody who can do it: something of the kind will certainly be done some day: but what one perceives at once is that the mere doing of either section of that work, no more efficiently than Buckle has done the rest, would be regarded by most qualified men as in itself a *magnum opus*, calling for years of special study and thought. If that can be said without extravagance, it is difficult to evade the conclusion that the man who gave us the existing fragment of the *Introduction to the History of Civilisation in England* was among the strongest of his time.

# APPENDIX.

## SYNTHETIC SUMMARY.

| Theory of Civilisation and Progress.                                                                                                                                                            | Pages of this Work.<br>[References to Buckle in Brackets.]                                | Pages of this Work.<br>[Other References in Brackets.] | Suggested Additions and Modifications.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
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| collective affairs of the movements of s in history, are re- to scientific law like nomena of any other nent of Nature. Stat- if crimes and other volition prove this 1 the most complex tates. | [i. 7-20]<br><br>128<br>228-229<br>307-309<br><br>[i. 20-35]                              | 309-319                                                | 1. This can be otherwise shown by a comparison of the methods and results of the sciences. The principle, however, laid down by Buckle that prediction is the test of every science, is seen by such comparison to be an exaggeration. Science may be retrodictive as well as predictive. The social science is both, within limits. As to statistics, it is always to be kept in mind that statistical knowledge itself (as one of the conditions) may affect the action statistically measured. |
| is expressly avowed the <i>Introduction to tory of Civilisation in d</i> (which further is ed) only a few of ernal laws of social ent are set forth.                                            | [i. 119, 131; ii. 375, 423]<br><br>317                                                    | 18-19<br>285-290                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| s part of Nature, and s of his affairs are to hed by a study of his physical and conditions and re-                                                                                             | [i. 20]                                                                                   | 342-343<br>361                                         | 3. This principle quashes cer- tain <i>a priori</i> objections to social reforms implied in some of Buckle's reasonings. Every human act is "natu- ral."                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| climates, with due of moisture ( <i>great d great</i> moisture to- being anti-progres- man) yield abund- regular food, and bundant population. ion in this stage is determined by phy           | [i. 96]<br>203-208<br>[i. 103]<br>381-383<br>48<br>138-139<br>146<br>193<br>35<br>[i. 44] | 515<br><br>511-514                                     | 4. This principle of economic determinism may be carried back to an earlier stage of human development than that at which Buckle be- gins. But even at an earlier stage, "mental laws" should be recognised as operating in their limited degree, cor- relatively to the physical.                                                                                                                                                                                                                |

| Buckle's Theory of Civilisation and Progress.                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Pages of this Work.<br>[References to Buckle in Brackets.]  | Pages of this Work.<br>[Other References in Brackets.]                                                                             | Suggested Additions and Modifications.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
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| 5. In such conditions, the abundant population is easily exploited: the results being military despotism and a leisured class, which sets up the beginnings of scientific knowledge, but does not carry it far.                                                             | [i. 41]                                                     | 4-5<br>[Davis, <i>Chinese</i> , Introd.]<br>[Cp. Spencer, <i>Sociology</i> , §§ 17, 449]<br>[See prop. 7 and 21 below]             | 5. Other conditions, such as the need for regulation of the Nile flood (noted by Draper) and the maintenance of roads and canals in a great empire, may specially further the exploitation of peoples by rulers. But antecedent militarism must be taken into account; also culture-isolation and culture-contact.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 6. Where Nature is less helpful, but not quite adverse, population will be less redundant; and there the knowledge collected in the primary civilisations may be fruitful of progress, material and intellectual. Civilisation is now mainly governed by intellectual laws. | [i. 156]<br>51, 55<br><br>29, 50<br>35, 142<br>[i. 153-157] | 262-264<br>52<br>317<br><br><br>[ <i>Free Review</i> , iii. 178]<br>[Buckle, i. 153]<br>263<br>[Spencer, <i>Sociology</i> , § 484] | 6. The relation of the two stages of civilisation, as relatively primary and secondary, is not quite distinctly shown by Buckle, who divides them into non-European and European. It is also to be remembered that one civilisation may destroy, by contact, one far below it, or may fail to assimilate the culture of a neighbour, for reasons lying in its institutions; and further that the physical conditions continue to have importance in the secondary civilisations, especially as regards the effect of the geographical structure of a region on the relations of the inhabitants, e.g. Greece, Switzerland, the Scotch Highlands. |
| 7. All progress is thus seen to be in terms of new knowledge.                                                                                                                                                                                                               | 35<br>129-131<br>179-181                                    | 87-88<br>160-174<br>282<br>330, note<br>317<br>262<br>375, 429                                                                     | 7. New knowledge is specially promoted by contacts and competition of cultures. States react on each other. Of old, therefore, relative <i>size</i> was of great importance to a civilisation.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 8. A tendency to fixation subsists in respect of love of old custom in general, and religious belief and hereditary royalism in particular:                                                                                                                                 | 175<br>[i. 120]                                             | 429<br>[Cp. Bagehot, <i>Physics and Politics</i> , ch. 3]                                                                          | 8. This may be more fully demonstrated on the lines of Spencer and Tylor, as regards the earlier stages of civilisation. But the spirit                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |

| Buckle's Theory of Civilisation and Progress.                                                                                                                                                | Pages of this Work.                 | Pages of this Work.              | Suggested Additions and Modifications.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
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|                                                                                                                                                                                              | [References to Buckle in Brackets.] | [Other References in Brackets.]  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Priesthoods are especially a force of fixation.                                                                                                                                              |                                     | 457                              | of routine imitation is only the obverse of the tendency to imitation which sets up new ideas and progress where different cultures meet.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 9. As against these forces of stagnation, progress is set up by the spirit of scepticism.                                                                                                    | [i. 334, 357; ii. 14, &c.]<br>330   | 248-249<br>282-283<br>331<br>339 | 9. Scepticism, it should be added, is seen to arise (a) as a result of comparison of cultures and creeds, (b) as a result of recoil and reflection after destructive conflicts of religious bodies, (c) as a result of the method of one study being applied to another more backward.                                                                                                                                                    |
| 10. Mere moral exhortation cannot produce progress. "There is no progress in the moral element." Improvement in general conduct is the result of additions to knowledge.                     | 271                                 | 271-285                          | 10. While it is perfectly true that only new knowledge can raise ideals of conduct all round, and only knowledge can make conduct good, it is reasonable to say that the "moral element" <i>does</i> progress in respect of temperaments becoming more sympathetic.                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 11. Mechanical or scientific discoveries may greatly promote progress by affecting the relations of (a) classes (as, the discovery of gunpowder), and (b) of nations (as, the steam engine). | 275<br>[i. 202-223]                 | 317<br><br>263<br><br>317        | 11. On the other hand, the application of steam power to industry may stimulate population in a high civilisation as much as do the food conditions of the primary civilisations (Egypt, India, &c.), and this tendency must be counteracted by social science. In other words, as it is above admitted, that an exploitable population is little susceptible of progress, we must guard against lapse into such state of exploitability. |
| 12. Discoveries in social science (as, modern political economy, overthrowing the bullion delusion and vindic-                                                                               | 275<br>[i. 202-223]                 |                                  | 12. Such gain may be carried much further. The doctrine of Malthus, supplemented by physiological knowledge,                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |

| Buckle's Theory of Civilisation and Progress.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Pages of this Work.<br>[References to Buckle in Brackets.] | Pages of this Work.<br>[Other references in Brackets.]                                                         | Suggested Additions and Modifications.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
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| cating freedom in trade) may greatly promote civilisation.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                            | 359<br>417<br>[Author's <i>Fallacy of Saving</i> ]                                                             | may bring about restraint of procreation without the evils which have hitherto been the factors in such restraint ; and a recognition, say, of the fallacy of Smith's doctrine of parsimony may lead to a new policy of social reconstruction.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| 13. The "spirit of protection" including the ideal of State interference with industry. is always injurious to progress, whether in literature, art, science, or industry. Politics being a backward art, there should be as little legislation as possible. Progress depends on the freest possible play of individual enterprise. | 121<br>125<br>133, 134<br>325<br>342, 343<br><br>360       | 19<br>134<br>150<br>185<br>324-360<br><br>360<br><br>355-360<br>[Author's <i>Fallacy of Saving</i> , Part II.] | 13. We must distinguish between evocative and repressive protection. The former may be, and has been, resorted to with great success ; and Buckle's array of evidence to discredit it breaks down. The backwardness of political art is a reason not for stoppage, but for more careful study. All arts and sciences advance from errors through less serious errors to truth or mastery. It can be shown that free competition (involving money-saving for personal provision) is incompatible with a maximum wealth production, and with general industrial well-being. Consequently it does not really give free play to the mass of individual capacity. The State may rightly promote both knowledge and industrial welfare. |
| 14. Religions do not improve mankind, but are improved by mankind in respect of its progress in knowledge. But Judaism and Christianity were above the level of the nations to whom they were given, and attacks on Christianity are to be deprecated.                                                                              | 11<br>[i. 256]<br>[i. 257-260]                             | 11<br><br>221-223<br><br>284                                                                                   | 14. The doctrine of the second sentence is plainly incompatible with the first, as also with express statements by Buckle, who himself virtually attacked Christianity by pointing out that it contributed nothing to moral thought. And the discrediting of all false religion is a necessary part of the process of extending knowledge.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |

| Buckle's Theory of Civilisation and Progress.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Pages of this Work.<br>[References to Buckle in Brackets.]       | Pages of this Work.<br>[Other references in Brackets.]                                            | Suggested Additions and Modifications.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
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| 15. Theological methods of explaining history darken counsel; and metaphysical methods in turn can add nothing to real knowledge. The right method of social science is induction from facts to general laws, which may be checked by the test of deduction.                           | [i. 11-19]<br>10<br><br>[i. 158-165]<br><br>[i. 168-174]         | 268                                                                                               | 15. This holds true further than Buckle carried it, his own Theism serving to disturb his scientific method, as above noted.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 16. Individuals and governments count for little politically save as hindrances; progress is a matter of prevailing conditions.                                                                                                                                                        | 133<br>176                                                       | 134-135<br><br>150-152<br><br>330-335                                                             | 16. Individuals may add greatly to knowledge (as Buckle himself shows), and governments may spread knowledge and modify conditions, as he also shows.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 17. It is fallacious to conceive of the relative progressiveness and backwardness of nations as resulting from innate "race" qualities. In so far as races <i>have</i> special characteristics, they result from traceable conditions. [This is at times forgotten by Buckle himself.] | [i. 40]<br>95-97<br>120-121<br>[ii. 118]<br><br>253<br>[ii. 121] | 404-408<br><br>413<br><br>469<br>483<br><br>317<br>[Free Review,<br>iii. 175,<br>176, 182]<br>503 | 17. The so-called unprogressive races are so by reason either of climate or (more likely) of lack of culture-contact. No civilisation "dies" save by military violence. Where a race once progressive (as the Greeks) ceases to progress, it is either through excessive militarism (as before the triumph of Macedonia) or conquest, or (as in later Byzantium) through the pressure of an organised religious system, and lack of external culture-contact. |
| 18. Individual heredity as a factor in civilisation is not yet so elucidated as to be a foundation for exact estimates.                                                                                                                                                                | 57<br>100<br>[ii. 176-178]                                       | 89                                                                                                | 18. It may provisionally be suggested, however, that great inequality of cultures between men and women will affect the race physiologically.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 19. Climate, apart from its indirect effects on civilisation as affecting food supply, can be seen also to affect it by making men's habits regular or irregular. [This follows Laing.] Beyond this, clim-                                                                             | 138<br>203-208<br><br>[i. 44, note]                              | 54<br><br>84-87<br>89                                                                             | 19. A direct effect of climate, however, must be surmised, and is partly traceable in temperaments. Climate may also be a factor in the tendency of some races to breed from immature types;                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |

| Buckle's Theory of Civilisation and Progress.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Pages of this Work.<br>[References to Buckle in Brackets.]           | Pages of this Work.<br>[Other References in Brackets.]                                    | Suggested Additions and Modifications.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| atic influence on men and nations is not yet scientifically determined.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                      | 88<br>[ <i>Cp. Taylor's Origin of the Aryans, ch. iv.</i> ]                               | though such a tendency may be set up by mere priestly ascendancy. Climate also tends to sift out physiological types, as suited to given environments.                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| 20. Natural surroundings affect a people's cast of thought. Thus countries much affected by earthquakes are specially superstitious; and those in which the forces of Nature in general are overwhelming are specially subject to religious ideas. So with sailors. So with countries subject to epidemics. | 82-88<br>[i. 120-130]<br>94<br>200<br>[i. 132-148]<br>143<br>84, 141 | 91-94<br>140-141<br>264<br>274<br><br>[ <i>Cp. President White's Warfare of Science</i> ] | 20. Certain expedients, however, may lessen the danger of earthquakes, as the slight houses of Japan; and any race may be as it were artificially steeped in superstition by an organised religious system, if the necessary conditions of progressive rational culture are absent or excluded. The effect of surroundings, on the other hand, may be corrected by education. |
| 21. Nations have repeatedly affected each other's history in a marked degree by their culture influence on each other. The beginnings of modern German literature are thus due to French stimulus.                                                                                                          | 160-175<br>[i. 237]                                                  | 87-88<br>160-174<br>282<br>330, note<br>317<br>262<br>503                                 | 21. This may be shown much more fully than it has been by Buckle. The cross-fertilisation of cultures by contact is a main factor in the progress of civilisation in all ages.                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| 22. England, as being the freest and least governed of the leading European States, has been the most steadily progressive.                                                                                                                                                                                 | 148                                                                  | 148-157<br>348-350<br><br>368<br><br>340                                                  | 22. But the more-governed States have in certain respects progressed further; and the English conditions have permitted backwardness in these respects. It must be kept clearly in view, further, that the higher degree of freedom in England is not due to "national character," but in large part to a series of political accidents.                                      |
| 23. Decline of militarism is a necessary condition of steady progress in civilisation. And militarism is declining.                                                                                                                                                                                         | [i. 190-292]                                                         | 263<br>91, 275<br>334-335                                                                 | 23. More allowance must be made than was made by Buckle for the element of personal influence in the creation of war. But the bad effects of militarism can                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |

| Buckle's Theory of Civilisation and Progress.                                                                                                        | Pages of this Work.<br>[References to Buckle in Brackets.] | Pages of this Work.<br>[Other References in Brackets.] | Suggested Additions and Modifications.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>24. In every great epoch there is some one idea at work which shapes the events of the time, this idea being a result of all the antecedents.</p> | 216                                                        | <p>491</p> <p>486</p>                                  | <p>even be seen where Buckle overlooked them ; and the principle applies further to the strifes of competitive industry.</p> <p>24. Though this is fairly made out by Buckle in the special case in hand, the proposition is not generally substantiated by him, and is dubious. Compare his remarks on complexity of social causes in review of Mill's <i>Liberty</i>. In any case an idea is at work to-day which opposes the idea of <i>laissez-faire</i> predominant in his day and in his politics.</p> |





# INDEX.

## A

ABBADIE, 173.  
 ABOUT, E., 88, *note*.  
 Abyssinia, 477.  
 Academy, Royal, 185.  
 — French, 330, *note*.  
 ADAMSON, Prof., 288, *note*.  
 "Administrative Nihilism," 360-361, 485.  
 AITKEN, J., 315.  
 ALEXANDER, 183-184, 382.  
 ALLEN, Grant, 23-24, 43-44.  
 — Prof. F. W., 33-34.  
 America, early civilisation of, 18, 51, 54, 202-208.  
 — types in, 54.  
 — [see United States].  
 Anarchism, 249, 445.  
 Anthropology, 379.  
 Antioch, 91.  
 AQUINAS, Thomas, 297.  
 Arabs, civilisation of, 51, 429.  
 ARGYLL, Duke of, 474.  
 Aristocracy, English, 154-157.  
 ARISTOTLE, 26, 395, *note*, 512, *note*, 532, *note*.  
 ARNOLD, M., 36-37, 355, *note*, 459.  
 Art, social, 497, 505-508.  
 Aryans, 86-87, 432.  
 Asceticism, 276.  
 Asia, civilisation in, 50, 54, *note*, 55, 478.  
 Assyrian religion, 92-93.  
 Astronomy, 315.  
 ASTRUC, 336.  
 Atheism, 249, 267, 539-540.  
 ATKINSON, H. G., 37.  
 "Attractive legislation," 508.  
 AUGUSTINE, St., 119.  
 AUSTIN, 393.  
 Australia, life in, 54.

## B

BABBAGE, 119.  
 BABINGTON, 230-242.  
 BACHOFEN, 399, *note*, 402, 432.

BACON, 48, 342, 360-361.  
 BAGEHOT, 34-36, 456-458, 459, 495.  
 BAIN, 372, *note*, 460-461, *notes*.  
 BALFOUR, A. J., 126-127.  
 Ballads and history, 220.  
 BANCROFT, H. H., 203-208.  
 BARROW on the Church, 244-247.  
 BAYLE, 336.  
 BEAULIEU, Leroy, 437.  
 BENTHAM, 56, 368, 393, 411.  
 BERKELEY, 249, 365.  
 BEVERIDGE, 238.  
 Bias in sociology, 358, 373, 391, 412, 477, 492.  
 Bible history, 144-145.  
 BICHENO, J. E., 298, *note*.  
 BIEDERMANN, 169-173.  
 Biology, development of, 43.  
 BLACKSTONE, 392.  
 BLAINVILLE, de, 512.  
 BLUMENBACH, 58.  
 BLUNTSCHLI, 14.  
 BODMER, 193, 168-169.  
 BOECKH, 79, 371, *note*.  
 BOLINGBROKE, 479.  
 BONAR, 425, *note*, 433-434.  
 Books, prices of, 237.  
 BOSSERT, 354, *note*.  
 BOSSUET, 220, 394.  
 Brazil, civilisation in, 36.  
 BRYCE, 365, 367, *note*.  
 BROWNE, Sir T., 197-198.  
 Buddhism, 87, 113, 310.  
 BURKE, 48, 340, 373, *note*, 407, 416-417.  
 BURNET, Bishop, 233-237.  
 — T., 248, *note*.  
 BURNS, 60-61.  
 BURSIA, 33.  
 BURTON, Dr Hill, 25, 253-255.  
 BUTLER, 249.  
 Byzantium, 274, 317, 478, 502.

## C

CÆSAR, 276.  
 CAIRD, Prof. E., 372, *note*.

- California, 204, 206.  
 Calvinism, Buckle and, 62.  
 Candolle, de, 359.  
 CAPEFIGUE, 210.  
 CARLYLE, 6, 13, 60, 66, *note*, 72, 105, 216, 260, 371.  
 CASSINI, 336, 347.  
 Caste, 193.  
 Catholicism, 151-152, 274, *note*, 446, *note*, 475, 478-480.  
 Celts, Scottish, 252-253, 324.  
 CHALMERS, 370.  
 CHAMBERS, R., 37-38.  
 Charles II. of England, 248.  
 — III. of Spain, 176, 328-329.  
 CHARRON, 341.  
 CHATEAUBRIAND, 441.  
 CHATTERTON, 345.  
 Chemistry, 311, 315.  
 CHESS, Buckle's, 543.  
 China, civilisation in, 18, 317, 405, 406, *note*, 479, 503.  
 Cholera, 141-142.  
 Christianity, 11, 70, 81-94, 188, 222-223, 252, 258, 261-262, 274, 324, 406, 412, 450, 457, 463-465, 467, 476-480, 503.  
 CHRISTISON, Prof., 285, *note*.  
 Civil Wars, 331-332.  
 Civilisation, autochthonous, 55, 205, 262, 267.  
 — primary and secondary, 51-55, 139, 205, 262-264, 267, 281, 381-382.  
 CLARKE, W. G., 88, *note*.  
 Class conditions, 359.  
 Clergy, English, at Restoration, 229-250.  
 — and literature, 10-16, 345-346.  
 — Scotch, 251.  
 CLIFFORD, 384.  
 Climate, effects of, 28, 34, 50-55, 59, 84-87, 138, 225-228, 380-383.  
 CLINTON, Fynes, 369, *note*.  
 CLODD, E., 28-33, 42, 44, *note*, 50, 56, 73.  
 COBDEN, 135.  
 COCKBURN, 219, *note*.  
 Code Law, 405, 408, 411.  
 COLBERT, 334-336, 337.  
 COLENSO, 71, 398.  
 COLERIDGE, 9, 58, 323, 368, 373, *note*, 531, 533, *note*, 540.  
 — Lord Chief Justice, 406, *note*, 534, 535, *note*.  
 — Sir John, 534-536.  
 COMTE, Auguste, 13, 20, 25, 44, 45-47, 57, 58, 72, 100, 109, 110, 131-132, 265-266, 278, 310, 372, 378, 437, 441, *note*, 461, 474, 505, 507, 510.  
 COMTE, Charles, 5, 8, *note*, 51, *note*, 59, *note*, 86, 118, 138, 225-228, 375, 382, 440-441, 444-445.  
 Comtism, 26, 209-210, 378.  
 Conquering races, 382.  
 COULANGES, Fustel de, 432, 450-452.  
 Condorcet, 99, 182, 221, 274, 311.  
 Conscience, 271-277.  
 Conservatism, 20.  
 CONWAY, Moncure D., 288, *note*.  
 COPERNICUS, 347.  
 Corn-Law, Repeal of, 135.  
 COWLEY, 233.  
 COWPER, 345.  
 CREIGHTON, Bishop, 16.  
 Crimes, Statistics of, 18.  
 Criticism, forces affecting, 3, 15, 73, 197, 212, 213-214, 221.  
 — methods of, 65, *note*, 76, *note*, 102, 110, 112, 114, 115, 200, 208, 209-210, 210-212, 323, 518, 546.  
 — in England, 45.  
 Cross-fertilisation of cultures, 87-88, 160-174, 375, 433, 489.  
 CROZIER, 473-474.  
 Crusades, 428-429, 439, 478.  
 CUDWORTH, 70, 249, *note*.  
 CUMBERLAND, 224, *note*.  
 Custom, 482.  
 CUVIER, 44, 312, *note*.  
 CYPRIAN, 9, *note*.
- D
- D'AGUESSEAU, 338.  
 D'ALEMBERT, 8, 169.  
 DALTON, 219.  
 DARWIN, 14, 15, 18, 23, 25, 28, 29, 30, 37-38, 42-44, 47, *note*, 48, 53, *note*, 78, 105, 107, 109, 117, 126, 257-260, 316, 358, 390, 402.  
 DAVIS, 18.  
 DAVY, 219.  
 "Death" of States, 263, 469, 472, 493, 500.  
 DE CAUS, 337.  
 Deduction, 63-71, 152-154, 343.  
 DE GUIGNES, 347.  
 Deists, the English, 133.  
 DE LOLME, 348.  
 Democracy, 177-181, 400, 412-416, 466.  
 DENINA, Abbé, 168.  
 DESCARTES, 48, 341, 342, 360.

Design argument, 257.  
 Determinism, 135, 286-292.  
 DIDEROT, 164-165.  
 DIESTERWEG, 431.  
 Divorce, 482.  
 DRAFER, J. W., 1, 4, 5, 10, *note*, 33-34, 52, 469-470.  
 DROYSEN, Dr, 261-265.  
 DRUMMOND, H., 21, 111, 471.  
 DU BOS, 165, 314, *note*, 317.  
 DUCOUDRAY, 487.  
 Duelling, 276.  
 DUNBAR, 4, *note*, 8, 18, 52.  
 DURKHEIM, 495.  
 "Dynamic Sociology," 504-516.

## E

EACHARD, 234-236.  
 Earthquakes, 18, 83, 91, 139-140, 199-202.  
 Economics, method of, 64.  
 — and Sociology, 485.  
 "Economic determinism," 432-434, 454-455, 496-497, 515.  
 Eddas, 94.  
*Edinburgh Review*, 199-200.  
 Education, State, 353-359.  
 EDWARDS, Jonathan, 81, 94.  
 Egypt, civilisation of, 4-5, 36, 51, 53, 138, 144-146, 193, 444, *note*, 476-477.  
 — religion of, 92-94, 477.  
 ELIOT, George, 44, *note*, 99, *note*, 524.  
 ELLIOTT, E., 534, *note*.  
 ELPHINSTONE, 194, 197.  
 EMERSON, 54, *note*.  
 Emotions, laws of, 99, 528.  
 — and knowledge, 511, 528.  
 England, freedom in, 5, 149-152, 154-167, 339-340, 340-342, 364, 439.  
 — culture in, 149-152, 185, 283, 419, 528-531, 536.  
 Ethnology, 95.  
 ETIENNE, L., 36, 265-266.  
 Europe, civilisation in, 35, 51, 53, 55, 128.  
 EUSEBIUS, 9, *note*.  
 EVHEMEROS, 283.  
 Exorcism, 139-141.  
 Experts, who? 41.

## F

Family, theories of, 475, 482.  
 Famine, 84.

FARRER, J. A., 93, *note*.  
 Feeling and Intellect, 99, 129-132, 508-514.  
 FERGUSON, A., 4, *note*, 8, 51, 67, *note*.  
 FERRI, E., 495-497.  
 FICHTE, 79, 422, 425-426.  
 FIELDING, 235.  
 FILMER, 395, 399.  
 FINLAY, 12, 104.  
 FISCHER, Dr E. L., 283-285.  
 FISKE, Prof., 98-111.  
 FLINT, Prof., 47, *note*, 213-229.  
 Food and civilisation, 49, 55, 60, 85-87, 137-139, 144-146, 192-196, 383.  
 FOURIER, 441-443, 474.  
 France, civilisation of, 60, 96, 122, 130, 151, 177-190, 214-215, 283, 324-342, 354, *note*, 359, 439, 443, 445-446, 449, 476, 479-481, 501, — culture, influence of, 66-67, 133, 160-174, 366.  
 FRANKLIN, 42.  
 FREEMAN, 12, 72, 74, 104, 107, 109, 321-322, 463, 466.  
 Free Trade, 49, 317.  
 Free Will, 10, 11.  
 French Revolution, 8, 129, 153, 177-190, 215-216, 395, 400, 416, 446-447, 455.  
 FROUDE, 12, 104, 140, 305-322, 466.  
 FULLWOOD, 238.  
 FUSTEL DE COULANGES. *See* Coulanges.

## G

GALILEO, 347.  
 GARDINER, S. R., 127, 365.  
 GEDDES, Prof. P., 299, *note*, 542, *note*.  
 Genetic force, 53, 507.  
 Geology, 311-312.  
 George III., 134, 349-350.  
 Germany, freedom in, 5, 149-153, 155, 181, 425-427.  
 — sociology in, 14, 191, 420.  
 — culture in, 97, 116, 137, 144, 149-153, 160-175, 181, 351-355, 420.  
 GIBBON, 48, 67, *note*, 104, 106, *note*, 112, 257, 258, 262, 349, 363, 370.  
 Gilbert, 347.  
 GILLIES, 370, 512, *note*.  
 GLADSTONE, 9, *note*, 229-250, 419.  
 GLANVIL, 249, *note*.  
 GLENNIE, J. STUART, 100-102.  
 GNEIST, 20, 155, 157.  
 GODWIN, 367, 427.  
 GOETHE, 160, 166-168, 354, *note*, 518.

GOGUET, 375, 394, 444, *note*.  
 Gold, discovery of, 312.  
 GOLDSMITH, 67, *note*, 234.  
 GOTTSCHED, 162-163, 168-169.  
 Government, origin of, 511, 515.  
 Greece, civilisation in, 38, 82-94, 137-138, 183, 262-263, 375, 382, 408-410, 429-430, 444, *note*, 463-465, 477.  
 — race types in, 88.  
 GREEN, J. R., 12, 13, 104, 295, 365.  
 GREG, 459.  
 "Gresham's Law," 267.  
 GROTE, 12, 13, 104, 260, 370-371, 420.  
 GROTIUS, 79.  
 GRUND, 355, *note*.  
 GRUPPE, 438.  
 GUIZOT, 5, *note*, 440-441, 443-444, 503, *note*.  
 GUMFLOWICZ, 488-492.

## II

Hades, the Greek, 92, 93.  
 HAECKEL, 153, 258.  
 HALLAM, 6, 12, 105, 106, 368, 439.  
 HALSBURY, Lord, 406, *note*.  
 HAMILTON, Sir W., 260.  
 HARRISON, F., 37, 145, 374, *note*.  
 HARTLEY, 348.  
 HARVEY, 342, 347, 529.  
 HAVET, 465.  
 Heat and civilisation, 207, 380-382.  
 Hebrew records, 394-399.  
 HEEREN, 79, 81, 87, 370, *note*, 428-430.  
 HEGEL, 14, 44, 72, 80-81, 150, *note*, 422, 426.  
 HEINE, 354, *note*.  
 Hell, doctrine of, 81-94, 114.  
 HENRY, Dr, 366.  
 HERDER, 8, 52-53, 160, 167, 421.  
 Heredity, 57-59, 100.  
 HERMANN, 370.  
 Hindu religion, 81.  
 — law, 402, 404, 405, 410.  
 Historians, preparation of, 6, 16, 124, 362, 505.  
 Historical method, the, 398.  
 History, Philosophy of, 58, 61, 121-124, 182-183, 296-322, 373, 461, 499.  
 HOBBS, 248, 249, *note*, 395.  
 HOBSON, J. A., 468, *note*.  
 HODGKIN, Dr, 16, *note*.  
 Holland, civilisation of, 142, 169, 567, 501.

HOOKER, 341, 395.  
 Huguenots in Germany, 162, 173-174.  
 HUMBOLDT, W. von, 81, 427-428.  
 HUME, 5, 8, 63-64, 67, *note*, 69-71, 126, 138, 158-159, 257, 258, 272, 315, 348, 362, 375, 400, 402.  
 HUTCHISON, 209, 218.  
 HURD, 349.  
 HUTH, A. H., 57, *note*, 214, 220, 357.  
 HUXLEY, 37-38, 70, *note*, 96, 145, 258, 360, 388-389, 392, 396, 404, 422, 425.  
 HUYGHENS, 336, 347.  
 HYSLOP, Dr J. H., 272, *note*.

## I

Icelanders, 85.  
 Imitation, 333, 457, 495.  
 Immature breeding, 89.  
 Inconsistency, 363.  
 India, civilisation in, 36, 49, 55, 56, 81-94, 128, 141-142, 192-198, 228-9, 406, *note*.  
 Individuals in history, 217-218, 324, 500.  
 Individualism, 385, 389, 485, 537.  
 Induction, 63-71, 148, 152-154, 343.  
 Inequality, sexual, 89, 482.  
 INGRAM, J. K., 56, *note*, 208-210.  
 Inheritance, 385.  
 Instinct and reason, 509-514.  
 Inquisition, Spanish, 95, 175.  
 Intellectual Laws, 35, 51, 57, 91, 129-132, 177-186, 264, 509.  
 Ireland, civilisation in, 49, 89, 317, 418, 478, 482, *note*.  
 Irrationalism, 21, 471.  
 Irrigation, 206.  
 Italy, civilisation in, 89, *note*, 94, 139-141, 199-202.

## J

Japan, civilisation in, 87, *note*, 139-140, 479, 504.  
 JEFFERSON, 367, *note*.  
 Jesuits, 481.  
 JESUS, 221, 223, 300-301, 539.  
 JONES, R., 56.  
 JONSON, 341.  
 JOWETT, 457.  
 Judaism, 92-94, 221, 324, 477, 503.  
 Jurism, 56.

## K

- KAMES, 8.  
 KANT, 5, *note*, 10, *note*, 99, 108, 150, *note*, 271-277, 280, 422-425, 444.  
 Kantism, 539.  
 KAY, 351.  
 KEATS, 531.  
 KEPLER, 362.  
 KETTLEWELL, 238.  
 KIDD, B., 21, 471-472.  
 KITCHIN, 330, 333-335, *notes*.  
 KLEIST, H. von, 166.  
 KLOPSTOCK, 163.  
 Knowledge, effect of, on civilisation, 11, 35, 129-132, 183, 273, 276, 281, 348, 353, 376, 509-514.  
 KOVALEWSKY, 491, 497.  
 Krishnaism, 87, *note*.  
 KUENEN, 397, 398.

## L

- Laissez Faire*, 19, 20, 184-185, 325, 333-335, 339-343, 349, 356, 361, 370, 384, 386.  
 LAMARCK, 43.  
 Land, property in, 450.  
 LANG, 72.  
 LANGE, 279-282.  
 Language, laws of, 431-432.  
 LAUDERDALE, 370, 440.  
 LASSALLE, 432.  
 "Law of Nature," 396, 401, 409-412, 491.  
 Law, profession of, 345, 346, 403.  
 Laws, sociological, 71, 128, 182.  
 LECKY, 12, 13, 71, 156, 218, *note*, 229-230, 247, 277, 450, 458-460.  
 LEFEVRE, 399, *note*.  
 LEIBNITZ, 170-172, 173.  
 LE PLAY, 449, 474-483, 505.  
 LESLIE, Cliffe, 49, 56, *note*, 60, 66, 223-224, *note*.  
 — Prof., 527.  
 LESSING, 9, 160, 164-166, 168, 422.  
 LETOURNEAU, 117-118, 379, 483-487, 505, 515.  
 LEWES, 196, *note*.  
 Liberalism, English, 419.  
 Life, theory of, 540-541.  
 LILIENFELD, P. von, 436, 492-494.  
 LINNÆUS, 347.  
 Literary men, 345-347, 354, *note*, 357.  
 Literature, Buckle's view of, 161, 354, *note*, 363.

- Literature, development of, 338-339, 345-347, 441.  
 — French, 364, 441.  
 — German, 160-174, 354, 421.  
 LITTRÉ, 46, *note*, 265-268.  
 LOCKE, 341, 360, 395, 398.  
 LOUIS XIV., 122, 124, 125, 133-134, 325-342.  
 LOWE, J., 369.  
 LOWELL, J. R., 418, *note*.  
 LUBBOCK, 379, *note*, 488.  
 LYELL, 18.

## M

- MABLY, 394, 440, *note*.  
 MACAULAY, 6, 12, 21, 26-28, 67-68, *note*, 105, 229-248, 367, *note*, 371, 524.  
 M'COMBIE, 228-229.  
 M'CRIE, Dr, 60.  
 MACKINNON, W. A., 369.  
 MACKINTOSH, 99, 219, *note*.  
 M'LENNAN, D. and J. F., 44, 118, 392, 399, *note*.  
 MAHAFFY, Prof., 88, *note*, 462-466.  
 MAINE, 17, 42, 44, 71, 107, 108, 117, 192-196, 392-420, 444, 456, 473, 490, 504.  
 MAISTRE, Joseph de, 229, 375, 416-417.  
 MALTHUS, 18, 42, 108, 219, 368, 370, 417, 494, 538.  
 Marriage, 400, *note*.  
 MARTENSEN, 265.  
 MARTINEAU, H., 37, 373.  
 MARX, Karl, 432-434, 496.  
 MASSON, Prof., 250-251.  
 Matriarchate, 4, 90.  
 MASSINGER and RACINE, 341.  
 MAURER, von, 432.  
 MAY, Sir Erskine, 155-157.  
 MAZARIN, 329-330.  
 Mazdeism, 92-93.  
 Medicine, 313.  
 — profession of, 345, 346.  
 — State, 483.  
 Mercantile Theory, 68.  
 Metaphysics, 10, 63, 75, 256.  
 Metaphysical method, 374-376.  
 Mexico, civilisation in, 36, 51, 52, 94, 193, 203-208, 381.  
 MICHELET, 441, *note*, 454.  
 MILL, James, 12, 13, 104, 368, 370.  
 — J. S., 44, 58, 103, 155, 266, 269-279, 292, 304, 356, 370, 373, *note*, 374, *note*, 420, 460-462, 522.  
 MILLAR, 4, *note*, 8.

MILLOT, 349.  
 MILTON, 395, 530.  
 Miners, superstition of, 143-144.  
 MITFORD, 370.  
 Mohammedanism, 310, 502-503.  
 MOLIÈRE, 341.  
 Molinists and Jansenists, 339.  
 MOLYNEUX, 249, *note*.  
 MOMMSEN, 14, 72, 431.  
 Monarchy, effects of, 329, 400, *note*, 413-415.  
 MONBODDO, 8, 52, *note*.  
 Money and civilisation, 4.  
 — changed values of, 232.  
 Monogenism, 489.  
 Monotheism, 69, 221, 490.  
 MONTAIGNE, 341.  
 MONTESQUIEU, 5, 7, 18, 51, 59, 66-68, 79, 96-97, 138, 169, 179, 225, 227, 262, 314, *note*, 375-376, 402, 430.  
 MONTFAUCON, 336.  
 Moral progress, 35, 99, 222-224, 270-285, 324, 513.  
 MORE, Hannah, 349.  
 MORETON, A. H., 369.  
 MORISON, J. Cotter, 374, *note*.  
 MORLEY, John, 12, 13, 37-39, 42, 274, *note*, 377, 395, 459, 540.  
 MOSHEIM, 421.  
 MÜLLER, K. O., 430.  
 MUSSER, de, 531, *note*.  
 Myth and sociology, 31-33, 85-87, 91-94, 144-146, 397.

## N

NAPOLEON, 183-184, 189, 426, 439.  
 — Third, 481.  
 National character, 95-97, 457.  
 "Natural Rights," 395, 410, 412.  
 Nature, laws of, 209, 305, *note*, 324, 491.  
 "Nature, State of," 396, 401, 406, *note*.  
 NEWENHAM, 368.  
 NEWTON, 134, 347, 362, 529.  
 NIEBUHR, 67-68, *note*.  
 NORRIS, J., 238.  
 NORTH, Dudley, 135.  
 Neo-Malthusianism, 417-418.  
 NOVICOW, 494.

## O

Optimism, German and English, 190.  
 Organism, the social, 389, 493.

ORTOLAN, 440, 441.  
 OVERTON, 249, *note*.  
 OWEN, Robert, 291-292, 367, 442-443.  
 Oxford, opinion at, 125.

## P

PAINE, 71, 224, *note*, 367.  
 PAPIN, 336-337.  
 Paradox, meaning of, 510.  
 PARKER, Theodore, 75-97, 137, 211, 352, *note*, 353, *note*, 522.  
 Parsimony, doctrine of, 363, 538.  
 PASCAL, 341.  
 Patriarchal theory, 393-400, 456.  
 Patriotism, 306.  
 Patronage, 324-360.  
 PATTERSON, 369.  
 PATTISON, 68, *note*, 112-113.  
 PEARSON, C. H., 54, *note*, 472-473.  
 Pentateuch, 395, 397-399.  
 Persian religion, 92-94, 221, 477.  
 — civilisation, 477.  
 Personality, Buckle's, 518-548.  
 Peru, civilisation in, 36, 52, 94, 193, 203-207.  
 PESCHEL, 84-85, 137-146.  
 Pestilences, 141-142.  
 PHILLIMORE, Sir R., 163.  
 Philology, 315.  
 Phrenology, 57.  
 Pioneers, Criticism of, 17, 37.  
 PLATO, 78, 89.  
 POE, 5, 532, 533.  
 Poetry and Science, 526-533.  
 Political Economy, 275, 454, 467.  
 Politics, Science of, 360, 389, 508.  
 Polytheism, 170, 221, 490.  
 Pooley, Case of, 534-536.  
 Poor Law, 387.  
 Population, Law of, 18, 50.  
 Portugal, 138, *note*, 139.  
 Positivism, 12, 13, 25, 209-210.  
 Prediction, Sociological, 302-304, 309-316, 320.  
 Presbyterianism, 213, 217.  
 PRESCOTT, 67, *note*.  
 PRIDEAUX, 79.  
 PRIESTLEY, 348.  
 Primeval Society, 399, 401-402, 515.  
 Progress, 56, 273-275, 281, 284, 360, 402, 405-408, 410, 413-415, 447, 457.  
 PROTHERO, Prof., 196-197, *note*.  
 Protection, Principle of, 19, 120, 125, 148, 151-152, 155, 180, 182-186, 215, 264, 317, 324-360, 427, 536.

Protection, evocative and repressive, 327.  
 PROUDHON, 445.  
 Prussia (*see* Germany).  
 PUFENDORF, 170.  
 Puller, 238.  
 PULSZKY, 17, 498-504.  
 Purgatory, 92.  
 Puritanism, 61, 185, 243, 253, 526.

## Q

*Quarterly Review*, 197-202.  
 QUINET, 8, *note*, 374, 441.

## R

Race, theories of, 95-96, 120-121, 405, 418, 433, 454-455, 473, 483, 501-503.  
 Races, lower, 472.  
 RAMBAUD, 487.  
 RANKE, 14, 89, *note*.  
 Rationalism, German, 421.  
 — and sociology, 470, 483.  
 RAYLEIGH and RAMSAY, Professors, 315.  
 RADCLIFFE, Dr, 541, *note*.  
 Reason and instinct, 99, 129-132, 272, 509-514.  
 Reformation, 251.  
 REID, 218.  
 Religion and civilisation, 11, 81-94, 159, 284, 475-480.  
 — and science, 514.  
 — Buckle's, 538-539.  
 REMUSAT, M. de, 265.  
 RENAN, 452-453, 465-466, 538.  
 Rent, law of, 49, 55.  
 Restoration, English Church at, 229-250.  
 Rhetoric, Buckle's, 520, 547.  
 RICARDO, 49, 55, 56, 219, 494.  
 Rice diet, 49, 192-196.  
 RICHELIEU, 134, 135, 218, 329, 330.  
 RICHTER, 354, *note*.  
 RITCHIE, D. G., 384, *note*, 468.  
 RITTER, 438.  
 Roads and civilisation, 550.  
 ROBERTSON, 18, 52, 67, *note*, 367.  
 ROCQUAIN, 181, *note*.  
 RODBERTUS, 433, *note*.  
 ROGERS, Thorold, 466-467.  
 Roman law, 393.  
 Rome, civilisation of, 137-138, 262-263, 403, 405-407, 408-410, 501.

ROUSSEAU, 8, 67, *note*, 167, 314, *note*, 394-396, 400, 401, 412, 425.  
 RUGE, 75, 157, 159, 175.  
 RUSKIN, 525.  
 RUSSELL, A., 250, *note*.  
 Russia, Buckle's popularity in, 1-2.  
 — civilisation in, 139-141, 151, 415, 478.

## S

Sailors, superstition of, 142-143.  
 SAINT SIMON, 377, 441, 474.  
 SAINTE BEUVE, 443.  
 Saracen civilisation, 274, 478.  
 Savages, climate and, 51.  
 SAVIGNY, 81.  
 Scepticism, general, 127-128, 448, 476.  
 — causes of, 282-283, 331, 479-480.  
 SCHÄFFLE, 38, 72, 434-438, 505.  
 SCHELLING, 80, 541.  
 SCHERR, Prof., 293.  
 SCHILLER, 160, 166, 167, *note*, 354, *note*.  
 SCHLEGEL, F., 34, 81.  
 SCHLOSSER, 162-164, 168.  
 Science, evolution of, 14-15, 126-127, 169-173, 183, 307-309, 480, 514.  
 — conditions of, 309-319, 486.  
 — and democracy, 177-181.  
 — purpose of, 309-310, 315.  
 — and poetry, 526-533.  
 Scotland, civilisation in, 11, 60-62, 116, 157-160, 250-255, 478.  
 — mental life in, 63-67, 71, 158-160, 366.  
 — freedom in, 159.  
 — history of, 211, 214-215, 217, 250-255.  
 SCOTT, 60-62.  
 Sculpture, Greek, 90.  
 SEAL, H., 468.  
 Second Chambers, 390-391, 448.  
 SEEBOHM, 469.  
 SERLEY, Prof., 12, 13, 20.  
 SENART, 87, *note*.  
 SERVIUS, 7, *note*.  
 Sexual Selection, 316.  
 SHAKSPEARE, 174, 320-321, 341, 364, 522, 529.  
 SHELLEY, 529, 532, 533.  
 SHERLOCK, R., 237.  
 SIDGWICK, Prof. H., 45-46, 72, 467-468, 471.  
 SIMCOX, G. A., 111-118, 119.  
 SIMON, 336.



- SISMONDI, 370, 439-441.  
 Sivaism, 82, 87.  
 SMEDLEY, 210.  
 SMITH, Adam, 63-68, 135, 159, 219, 224, *note*, 232, *note*, 326, 344-347, 400, 427, 494, 538.  
 — Goldwin, 8-9, 294, 300-305.  
 — Prof. Robertson, 71.  
 — Sydney, 219, *note*.  
 — W., 312.  
 Social Contract, 394.  
 Social Science Association, 486.  
 Socialism, 153, 386, 425, 432, 491, 495.  
 Society, beginning of, 500.  
 Sociology, process of, 7-8, 14-15, 21, 38, 225, 366, 517.  
 — method of, 67, 72, 77, 97, 109, 120-136, 179, 182, 190, 226, 294, 296-322, 373, 376, 378-391, 461, 468, 484-487, 489-495, 500-515.  
 Sophistry, religious, 259.  
 SOUTH on the Church, 242-244, 247-248.  
 Spain, civilisation in, 11, 94, 116, 134, 138, *note*, 139, 175-177, 200, 275, 364, 478.  
 Sparta, 89, 375, 425.  
 SPENCE, 393, *note*.  
 SPENCER, 12, 20, 28, 30, 38, 44, 72, 107, 108, 109, 117, 266, 297, 360-362, 365, 378-391, 436, 455, 456, 484-485, 505, 510, 515, 516, 538.  
 SPENSER, 530.  
 STAHL, 118.  
 STARCKE, 399, *note*, 401.  
 Statistics, philosophy of, 18-19, 65, 121, 123, 170, 270, 278, 285-291.  
 Steam as a civiliser, 275.  
 STEPHEN, L., 12, 13, 31, 40-75, 372, 459.  
 STERNE, 346.  
 STEWART, Dugald, 65, *note*, 211, 218.  
 Stirling, Dr J. H., 25, 255-260.  
 — Sir J. F., 468.  
 STRAUSS, 538.  
 Strife in Nature, 423-425, 490, 491.  
 Struggle of ideas, 455, 491.  
 STUART, G., 366.  
 STUBBS, Bishop, 12, 13, 16, 48, 104, 293-300.  
 Style, Buckle's, 47; Maine's, 392.  
 Suicide, 286-291.  
 Superstition, 252.  
 Survival of fittest, 388.  
 Sweden and Norway, civilisation in, 138.  
 SWIFT, 239-240, 249, 346.  
 SYMONDS, J. A., 357, *note*.
- T
- TACITUS, 310.  
 TAINE, 54, *note*, 354, *note*, 452-455, 531, 532, 533, *notes*.  
 TARDE, 495.  
 TAYLOR, Jeremy, 222.  
 — Miss H., 106, *note*, 115, *note*.  
 Teachers, 346-347.  
 Teleology, 507, *note*, 512, *note*, 516.  
 TEMPLE, Dr, 9.  
 Terror and religion, 82.  
 TERTULLIAN, 9, *note*.  
 Teutonic religion, 94.  
 Theism, 10, 63, *note*, 423, 470.  
 Theology, methods of, 9-12, 16, 63, 71, 281, 294-298, 300-304, 377, 448, 471, 475-480.  
 THIERRY, 81, 439-441, 454.  
 THIRLWALL, 13, 370-371.  
 Thirty Years' War, 171.  
 Three Stages, Law of, 110, 226-227, 374, 376.  
 TILLEMONT, 336.  
 Tithes, 235.  
 TOCQUEVILLE, de, 413, *note*, 446-449.  
 Tönnies, 491, 497.  
 TOPINARD, 379, *note*.  
 TORRENS, W. M., 371.  
 TOULONGEON, 439.  
 TOWERSON, 238.  
 TREVELYAN, 26, 27.  
 Tritheism, 248, *note*.  
 Tropical civilisation, 381.  
 TURGOT, 179, 314, *note*.  
 TYLOR, 24, 31, 44, 379, *note*.
- U
- United States, culture in, 97, 116, 351-356.  
 — progress in, 417, 443.  
 Universities, English, 5-6, 9, 15, 16, *note*, 17, 20, 74, 103-105, 113, 118, 125, 150, 295.  
 — German, 150.
- V
- Vaccination, 57, 416, 485, *note*.  
 VAUBAN, 337.  
 Vedas, 85-87.

- VEGETIUS, *cited*, 7, *note*.  
 VENN, Dr, 19, 285-291.  
 VERSCHOYLE, 488.  
 Vice and civilisation, 89.  
 VICO, 7, 79.  
 VITRUVIUS, *cited*, 7, *note*.  
 VOLNEY, 225, 397, *note*, 469.  
 VOLTAIRE, 67, *note*, 169, 179, 182,  
 218, 362, 396-398.  
 VORLÄNDER, 147-191.
- W
- WACHSMUTH, 79, 82-84, 430.  
 Wages, law of, 49.  
 WAITZ, 438.  
 WAKE, S., 473.  
 WALLACE, Dr MacKenzie, 2-3.  
 — Dr A. R., 37-38, 316.  
 War, 58, 171, 202, 263, 315.  
 — and progress, 263, 334-339, 391,  
 424, 491.  
 WARD, LESTER, 384, *note*, 504-516.
- WARBURTON, 112-114, 120, 348.  
 WATSON, Dr, 366.  
 — W., 534, *note*.  
 WATT, James, 347.  
 WEISMANN, 17, 58, 89, 285, 316.  
 WELLINGTON, 48.  
 WESLEY, 143.  
 WHEWELL, 542.  
 WIELAND, 163, 168.  
 WOLLSTONECRAFT, Mary, 367.  
 Women, status of, 89-91.  
 WORMS, R., 494-495, 497-498.  
 WORDSWORTH, 531, 532, 533.  
 WRIGHT, Frances, 291.  
 WYROUBOFF, 26.
- Y
- YOUNG, 117.
- Z
- Zoology, 316.  
 ZUMPT, 351, *note*, 438.

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